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William Bennett on War and the American Soul

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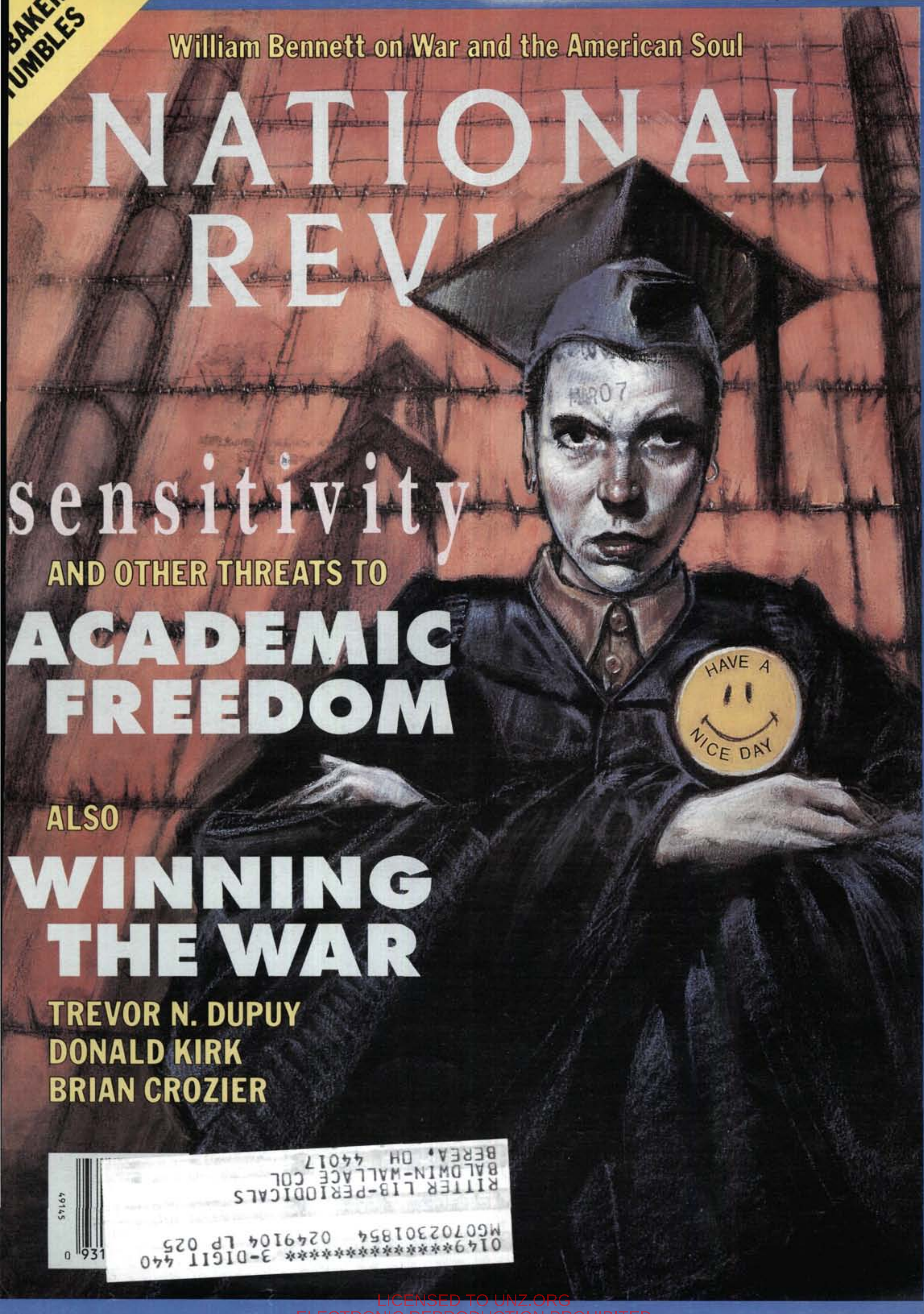

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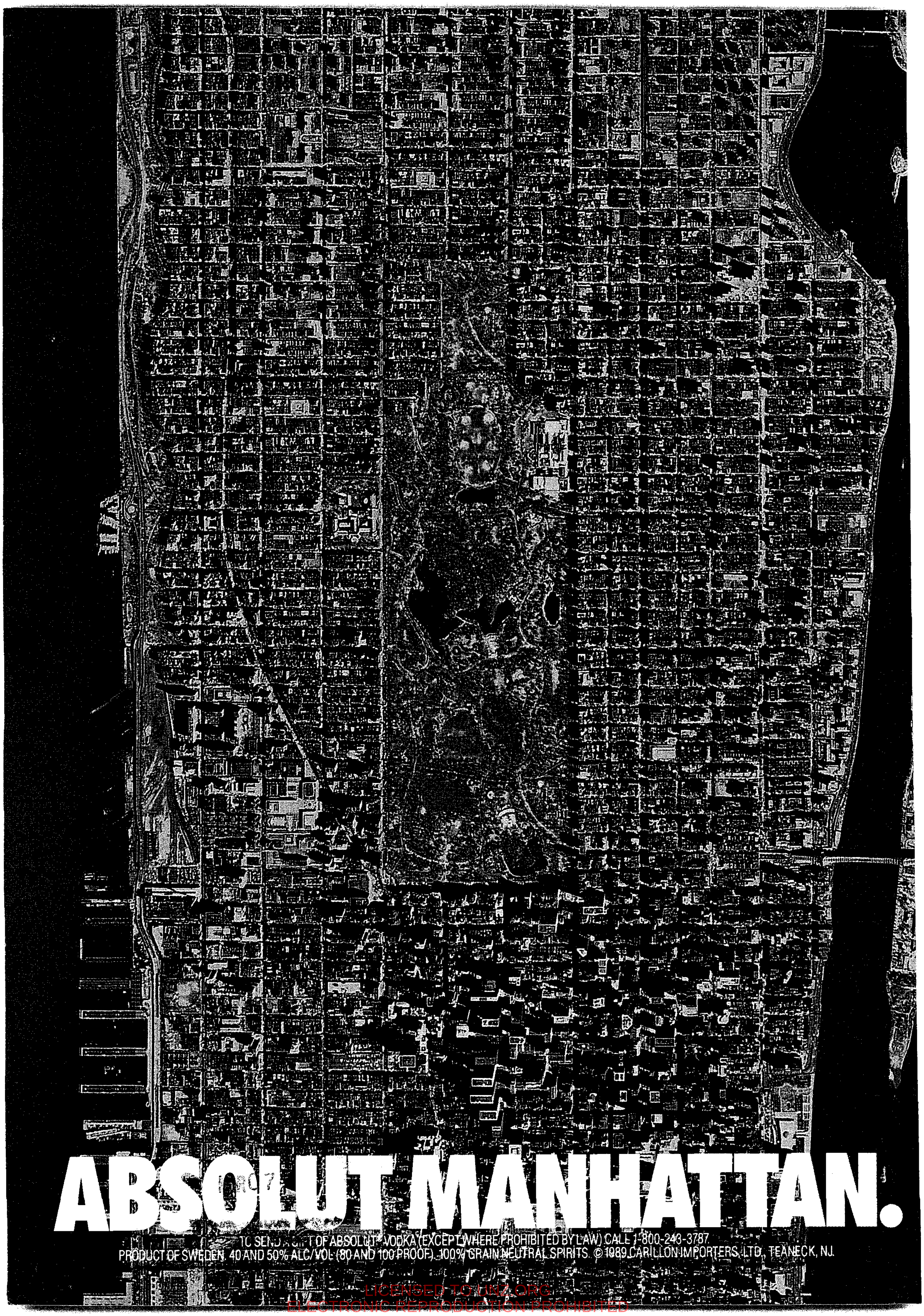

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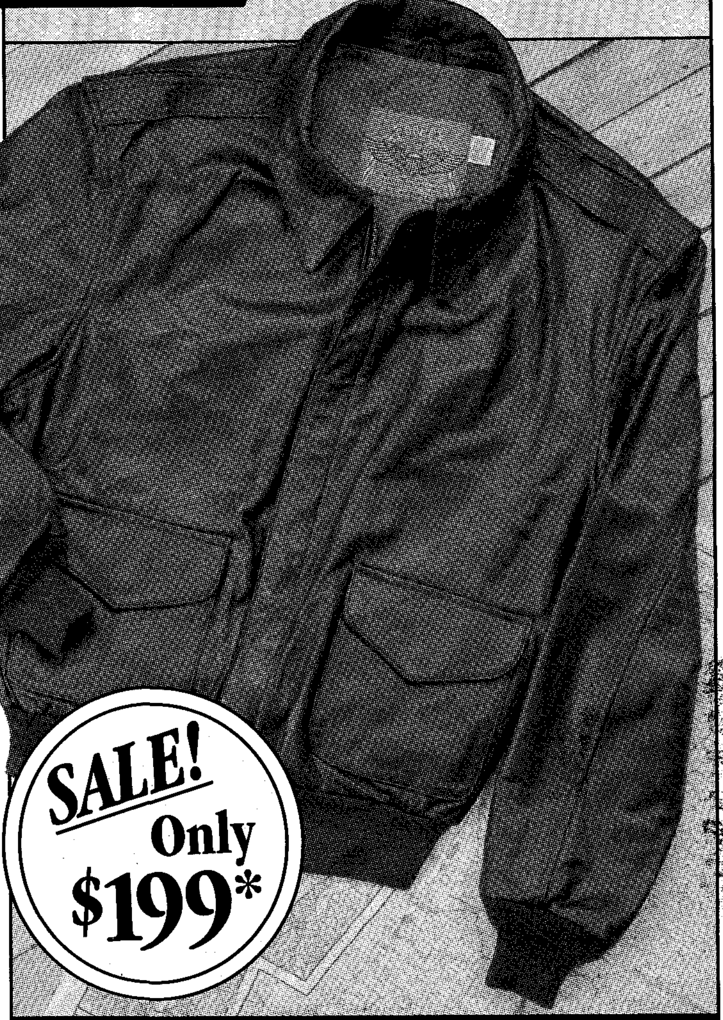

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NATIONAL REVIEW

MARCH 18, 1991 VOL. XLIII, NO. 4

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The Audit Bureau

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In Search of Cures for California's Growing Pains

California. The very name conjures up gold rushes and endless summers. But the California dream has a dark side. Air pollution. Clogged highways. Housing shortages. The side effects of rampant growth.

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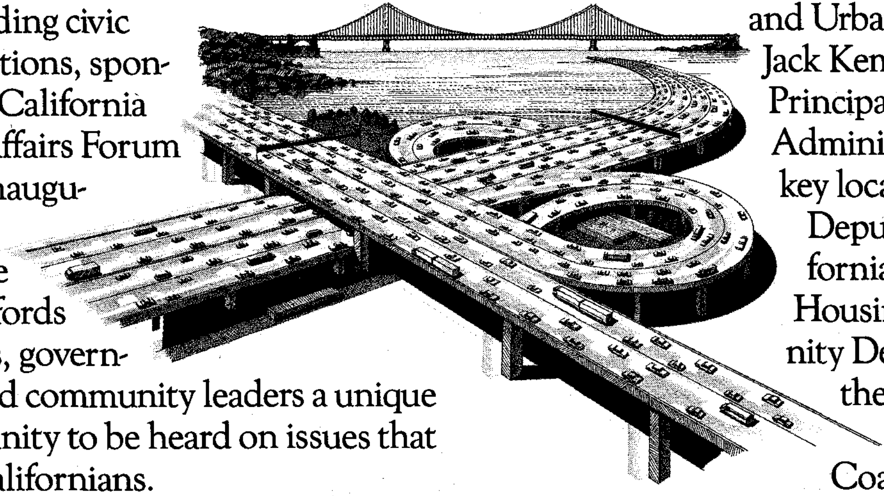

At the inaugural Forum in Los Angeles, futurist Alvin Toffler addressed California's transportation crisis. The Forum was repeated in San Francisco a week later.

In 1989 the Forum returned by popular demand in an expanded format. On November 2 the Forum convened in San Francisco to address the growing imbalance between jobs and housing in the San Francisco Bay Area. A week later in Los Angeles the Forum's subject was how to strike a balance between economic growth and air quality. Both events attracted some 200 state and local officials and business leaders even in the aftermath of the region's biggest earthquake in nearly a century.

Such attendance is hardly surprising with nationally noted speakers like U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Jack Kemp, The EPA's Principal Assistant Administrator and such key local officials as the Deputy Director of California's Department of Housing and Community Development and the Executive Director of the South Coast Air Quality Management District.

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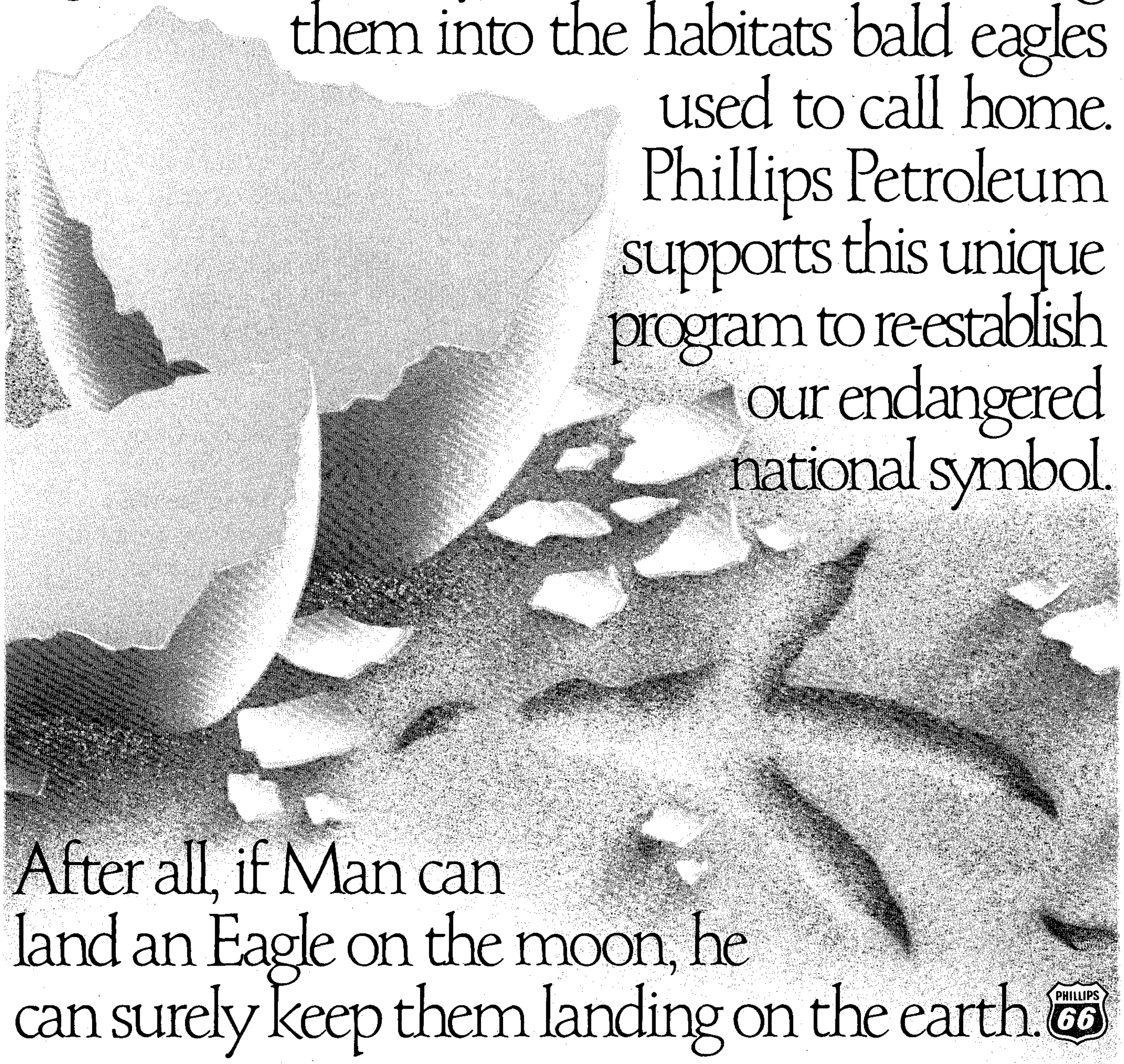

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LETTERS

Questioning Cato

I could assume that the item on Republican National Committee fund raising was an attempt at satire, but something tells me it wasn't ["Off the Record," Feb. 11]. The piece said the RNC was, as of mid January, "in the hole by some $5 to $6 billion, and is clawing furiously to raise cash by January 31, when it must file an annual report with the Federal Election Commission."

Our finance division, I admit, is always "clawing furiously" to raise money. And if I wanted to continue the satire I could say we did raise "$5 to $6 billion," because, if Cato had waited to read our January 31 report, he would have seen that we are in the black, not the red.

The presidential letter mentioned did achieve its revenue targets, as do all of our letters from the President. And, by the way, one more factual error—any money raised in January goes on the 1991 report, not 1990. And Cato's assertion that our larger donors have stopped their giving is as far off as the billion-dollar claims. Our Eagles program continues its success.

I believe you owe the RNC an apology, and your readers the truth. We are not, and were not, in the hole. Our fund raising has been right on target. We met our budget in 1990. We will meet our budget in 1991. By the way, one more thing I think you owe us, a phone call anytime you're doing another such item so that we can give you the facts.

Mary Matalin
Chief of Staff
Republican National Committee
Washington, D.C.

Miss Matalin's complaint about the figure Cato supplied for the RNC's debt is completely justified, though not quite for the reasons she says: because of a production error, we printed "$5 to $6 billion" rather than $5 to $6 million, *as we should have. But the substance of her charge—that the RNC is not in debt, that it is not suffering from financial problems—is much harder to square. To begin with, Cato did call the press office and ask to speak to the finance office; the call was never returned. More to the point, of all the Republican campaign committees, the RNC alone refuses to disclose* any *debt in the statements it files with the FEC. Our sources confirm our original figures, as well as the loss as a result of the President's fund-raising letter. Cato will return to this in the next issue. Renew your subscription today.*

The Knockabout Journalist

Malcolm Muggeridge was the twentieth-century's first and most insouciantly shameless Politically Incorrect Person ["Remembering Muggeridge," Dec. 31]. Anyone who read his most representative "knockabout journalism"—to deploy his overly modest phrase with the same sensibilities he sought to develop, uphold, and defend—would think it most natural upon putting one of his volumes back on the shelf to call him a friend.

The profession has lost its most facile practitioner, but God has gained for Himself a personal treasure, who will make Him, like Figaro, laugh that He might not weep at the utter wreck His foolish children, thinking themselves so smart, have made of earth from the moment they called in the repairman to fix something that wasn't irreparably broke.

Jeffrey A. Kallman
Washington, D.C.

The Uncommon Denominator

Ambrose Evans-Pritchard ["Books, Arts & Manners," Dec. 31] wonders why Protestantism isn't more successful in Mexico, since it is a devout country with an "anti-clerical" government, just as Guatemala was when Protestantism was making gains there.

He forgets that while Mexico's rulers are indeed anti-clerical Protestants, General Ríos Montt is much more: a fundamentalist theocrat. The persecution of the Catholic Church under his dictatorship rivals any persecution of Protestants by Catholics.

And maybe the Mexican people have heard the news from north of the border about their favorite TV idols. At least some of the success of Protestantism south of the border has to do with the fact that the electronically graven TV images, unlike the statues in church, can plead with viewers to turn from praying to statues to praying to themselves.

But I suspect that if we also take into account the denominational shift here in the U.S., where the percentage of Protestants has declined 23 per cent while the percentage of Catholics has increased 40 per cent since 1947, the answer may turn out to be that denominational loyalty is in international decline.

Don Schenk
Allentown, Pa.

Cutting Taxes the World Over

The Second World War is over. The German people are now our friends. Would someone please let Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn know that there is no excuse for his assertion that for Germany "new taxes are necessary to reconstruct an area laid waste by the follies of socialism" ["On the Scene," Feb. 25].

Democrats in the U.S. have argued that higher taxes will solve the problem of high gasoline prices; that low gasoline prices demand higher taxes; that strong economic growth requires higher taxes; so does a recession. Yet before Mr. Kuehnelt-Leddihn's assertion, I had never heard the claim that higher taxes will cure socialism. I thought higher taxes *were* socialism.

Some argue that allied economic abuse of a defeated Germany after the First World War led to the Second World War. I shudder to think what will happen if the newly reunited Germany takes Mr. Kuehnelt-Leddihn's advice.

Grover Norquist
Americans for Tax Reform
Washington, D.C.

In principal I solemnly agree with the first part of Mr. Norquist's letter, but the German situation is a unique one. Now thrown into the lap of West Germany is a country totally ruined by socialism, where the basis of industry and partly even of agriculture has to be rebuilt. Together with two other big expenses—bribing Moscow and helping the Gulf alliance—this requires increased taxes.

The other objection is totally beside the point. The reparations after 1919 resulted in utter financial ruin with millions of unemployed and an exchange rate of 4.2 trillion marks to the dollar. This destroyed and proleterianized the middle class. In three elections, the National Socialists together with the Communists therefore got 60 per cent of the vote; the end of democracy was at hand. This is a commonplace known to every historian. Therefore the same *demand for reparation was not made after World War II. The results were too obvious. Democracy, after all, is a fair-weather form of government.* —EvKL

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FROM THE EDITOR

Life and Death Morality

■ We deal with the Gulf War elsewhere. But it is already clear that, as Bill Bennett argues on page 41, the America fighting this war is very different from the passive, defeatist America that emerged from Vietnam.

It is confident, steadfast, determined on a successful outcome, but in no sense callously jingoistic. One commonly hears supporters of the war express sympathy for Iraqi soldiers facing the coalition's technological might. Any demonization of the enemy is reserved for Saddam Hussein personally. And those justifying military action do so either from "just war" theory or from calculations of national interest and international stability.

Democracies were not supposed to be able to fight wars in this spirit of prudence and morality. They were supposed to be either hot-blooded in their lust to crush demonized enemies or pacifistic in their inability to tolerate the sight of televised conflict.

The American people have risen above both passions. They have shown a willingness to wage the limited, occasional, necessary wars of a *pax Americana*. And because the world has seen that, the likelihood is that they won't have to wage them.

■ Flipping through some political posters in a left-wing bookshop, I noticed a South African poster designed, laudably enough, to discourage the intertribal murders there (described by Peter Taylor on page 46). It showed six arms, all black, stretching out to produce three firm handclasps. The caption read: "We're all the same color. Let's stop the killing."

I had flipped on to the next poster before something about the slogan struck me as odd. Flipping back again, I pondered its logic. Was the appeal to refrain from murder based upon the fact of common race? Would it be all right to continue the killing if we were all of different colors? And if so, was this a proclaimed policy or merely a slip of the tongue?

No one seems to have asked these questions, perhaps because they would cast aspersions on the good faith of liberation movements. But one cannot help contrasting the tolerance shown toward these black hands with the indignation directed at the white hands in Senator Helms's advertisement attacking racial quotas.

Let me offer Senator Helms an idea for next time. Three multi-racial handclasps under the slogan: "We're all Americans. Let's stop the favoritism." You never know, it may catch on.

■ Mr. Joseph Schwartz corrects my assertion that Tallulah Bankhead's remark, "There is less in this than meets the eye," was directed at Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. My apologies to you and my thanks to him.

Mr. Schwartz maintains the quip was made to Alexander Woollcott about something by the Indian poet Tagore. According to the *Penguin Dictionary of Modern Quotations*, we are both wrong. Miss Bankhead did indeed make the remark to Woollcott—but about a play by Maeterlinck.

It is, of course, possible that Miss Bankhead, recognizing the crack to be a good one, delivered it constantly, and that Woollcott heard it twice. As regular readers of this column will know, such things happen.

It is equally plausible that, once the remark had been minted, it was instantly seen to be a brilliant hit at literary mystagoguery in general and so quoted against Beckett, Maeterlinck, et al. My feeling, for instance, is that if it wasn't used about *Waiting for Godot*, it ought to have been. And perhaps Mr. Schwartz feels the same about Tagore. In short, Miss Bankhead emerges as the coiner of a better phrase than Beckett, Tagore, or, I dare say, Maeterlinck ever uttered. If anyone disagrees, I challenge him to coin a phrase on behalf of one of them about a play by Miss Bankhead. The usual bottle of fizz.

—JOHN O'SULLIVAN

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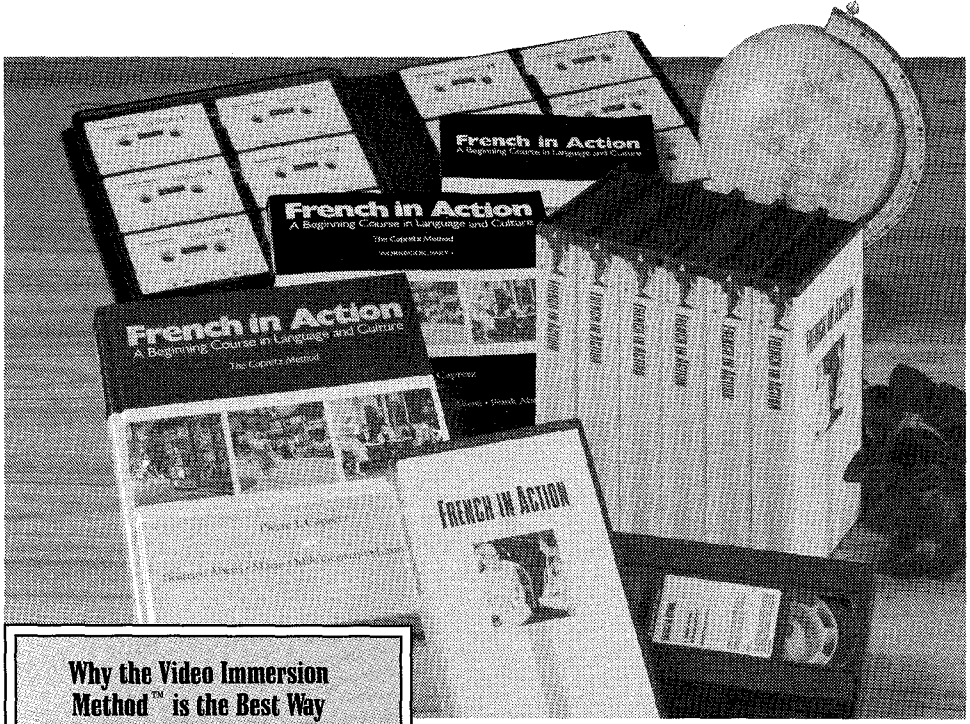

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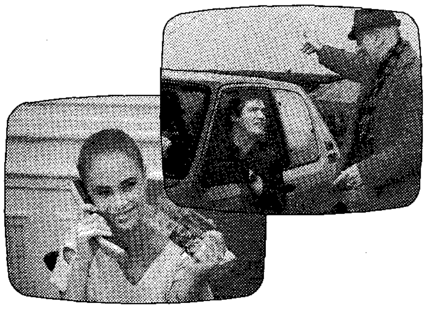

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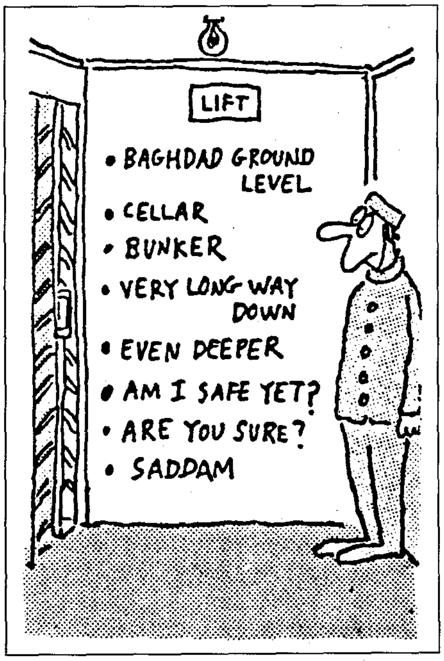
ON THE RECORD

■ There's no hiding place. Democratic doves are getting it on all sides, from Sen. **Phil Gramm**'s comment, "If **Jimmy Carter**, **Walter Mondale**, and **Michael Dukakis** [had been] elected President, the Berlin Wall would still be standing, and **Saddam Hussein** would be in Saudi Arabia," to Mississippi GOP chairman **Clarke Reed**'s exuberant response to Democratic congressional leadership's stance against Gulf War: "Politically it's gangbusters. This is the only thing that could give President **Bush** coattails." . . . ACU has stirred flames with its just-released rundown of 13 Senate and 17 House votes on SDI funding, 1987 to 1990. It turns out that Sens. **Biden**, **Kennedy**, **Mitchell**, **Bradley**, **Moynihan**, among others, voted against all such resolutions (and hence against funding for the Patriot missile), as did two prominent Democratic presidential contenders in the House, **Richard Gephardt** and **Patricia Schroeder** of the House Armed Services Committee. (Sen. **Sam Nunn** had a 54 per cent ACU rating on SDI, and Sen. **Albert Gore**, the only Democratic presidential contender to vote for Gulf War resolution, a 46 per cent rating.) . . . High Frontier chief, retired Gen. **Daniel O. Graham**, blames Teddy Kennedy for Israeli Scud casualties through his opposition to funding for Patriot and Israeli Arrow anti-missile systems. . . . In Connecticut, GOP chairman **Richard Foley** aims to make trouble for Democratic Sen. **Chris Dodd**, notorious dove and scourge of the Contras, when he comes up for reelection. "He not only voted against Bush on the Persian Gulf," says Foley, "[he voted] against cruise missiles [the Tomahawk] and the Patriot. These are threshold questions we will raise." . . . On the campuses, College Republicans staged dozens of successful pro–Gulf War rallies all around the country, bringing out crowds of four thousand at Ohio State U., 3,500 at Mississippi State U., and a thousand or so at Purdue, UCLA, USC, and U. of Texas at Austin. . . . At Harvard, students **Adam Taxin** and **Harry Wilson** signed up seven hundred members for their Students United for Desert Storm in the first week of its existence. . . . Finally, the war has caused rift between the **Redgrave** sisters. When **Vanessa** told a rally in Barcelona: "We have to unconditionally defend Iraq against American, British, and Israeli aggression," **Lynn** dissociated herself from those remarks: "I am with George Bush all the way."

■ Look for a renewed assault on U.S. intelligence establishment from the Left. In the Senate, Daniel Patrick Moynihan has taken the lead. His "The End of the Cold War Act" (S-236) would abolish CIA and turn its functions over to the State Department. . . . Director of ACLU's Washington office, **Morton Halperin**, charges that "behind every international crisis in the postwar period has been a triggering event of a covert operation." . . . In the House, Speaker **Tom Foley** has raised a furor by assigning Berkeley radical Rep. **Ron Dellums** to the supersensitive House Intelligence Committee. **Larry Cott**, editor of *NR*'s *Combat* newsletter on the Left in the Sixties, reminds us that in 1984 Dellums told a political gathering that "we should totally dismantle every intelligence agency in this country piece by piece, nail by nail, brick by brick." . . . The Congressional Black Caucus, of which Dellums was recently chairman, continues to move left. In the congressional vote endorsing the war once it had started, five members of the Black Caucus—**Mervyn Dymally** and **Maxine Waters** (Calif.), **Charles Hayes** and **Gus Savage** (Ill.), and **Craig Washington** (Tex.)—voted no confidence. Another six—Dellums, **Cardiss Collins** (Ill.), **Major Owens** and **Edolphus Towns** (N.Y.), **Donald Payne** (N.J.), and **Henry Gonzalez** (Tex.)—voted "present," withholding their support from President Bush. . . . **Ramsey Clark**, in Iraq with a peace group, says he saw "more than a thousand homes, offices, apartment houses, and commercial buildings seriously damaged," and assures us that "*none* of these damaged civilian buildings showed any evidence whatever of use by the Iraqi military." There he goes again. After a visit to Hanoi during Vietnam War, Clark reported our POWs were being held in prisons with "rooms better and bigger than the rooms in essentially every prison I have ever visited anywhere." He was "particularly touched," he said, by the medical and dental treatment afforded the prisoners.



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■ Good News, Bad News: Bush Administration will honor **Margaret Thatcher** with Medal of Freedom on her visit to States March 7. Established by **Harry Truman**, Medal of Freedom is highest civilian honor bestowed by U.S. Government. . . . *Boston Globe* reports Dartmouth President **James Freedman** has been dropped from list of potential successors to **Derek Bok** as president of Harvard, but says **Reagan** chief economic advisor **Martin Feldstein** is among finalists. . . . *The American Spectator* picked up this one from **Ted Turner** statement upon receiving Humanist of the Year Award: "I'm sure **Christ** *was* a wonderful person," but as for His having come down and suffered on the Cross "so that our sins would be washed away—weird, man, I'm telling you."

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Eclectic Third Reader. Authors like Addison, Irving, Byron...Bible selections...excursions into history like the marvelous "Alexander the Great" — adults can read this book with pleasure. After your child of 8 or 9 finishes it, he's reading better, and understanding more, than most high schoolers.

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Mark Sullivan, in his 6-volume history, *Our Times*, ranks McGuffey up with Washington and Lincoln in influence. And a wonderful influence it was. Do your children deserve less?

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THE WEEK

■ George McGovern is considering another bid for the Presidency (yes, really). As one supporter explains it: "George has a little gleam in his eye. He's sampling things." Yes, we drew the same conclusion. But possession of those sorts of "things" is a felony inside the three-mile limit.

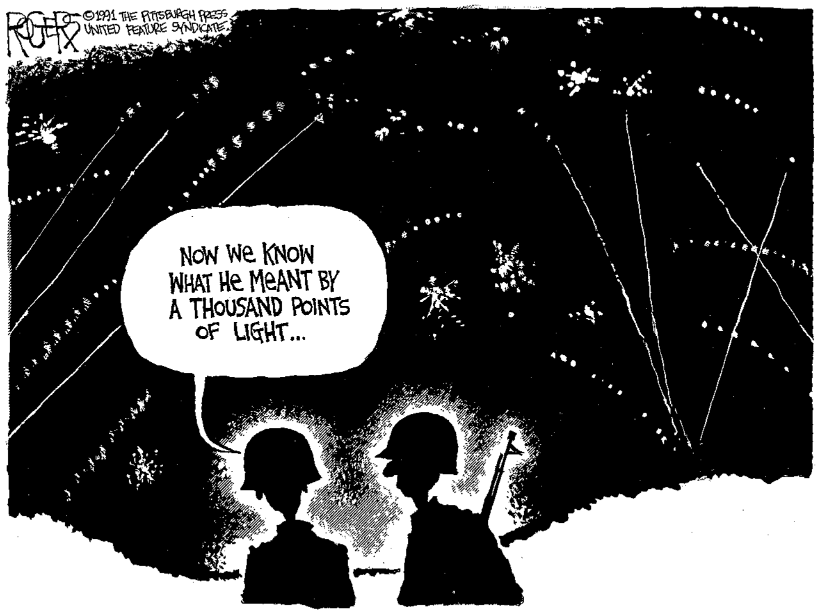
■ Harold Stassen for Veep?

■ In 1978, President Carter signed Executive Order 12333, prohibiting government employees from "engag[ing] in, or conspir[ing] to engage in, assassination." The order was directed, in those post–Vietnam, post–Church Committee days, against the CIA. Thirteen years later, Representative Bob McEwen (R., Ohio) has offered a bill to suspend the order "with respect to the leadership of Iraq" (and we're not talking about the Iraqi Postmaster General). Well. The prohibition against targeting foreign rulers is an old one, and civilized states do well to uphold it—in large part because uncivilized states will be more apt to resort to assassination as a diplomatic tool, and will probably do it more effectively. Still, it was wrong (and typical) of the Carter Administration to have put a moral principle into cold type, since, in the heat of politics, cold type can be twisted to many uses. If opposition to the war became opportune, and if, during the course of the war, a bomb dropped on Saddam Hussein's head, could a vindictive Congress haul up Colin Powell as the dropper? Congressman McEwen wished to forestall that event. But since—and this is the last qualification—passing his bill now would amount to a bounty on Saddam Hussein's head, which would represent a change in our stated policy of not targeting him, it is probably best left unpassed. There will be time enough to clean up the books when peace comes.

■ Pitching in to help the war effort are the nation's supermarket tabloids, which are carrying grim exposés on Saddam Hussein. One charges that he kills young women who blab about their one-night stands with him; another says the aging Hitler (yes, he's still around) has journeyed to Baghdad to guide his young protégé. "Of course you have to take this stuff with a grain of salt," says a longtime student of these publications. "But if even half of it's true, this bird is nastier than Sinatra and more brutal than Crosby."

■ To the consternation of many conservatives, California's Ron Dellums has been named to the House Intelligence Committee. Curiously, not one liberal journalist has seen fit to use the image that was so popular in the Reagan era: "Setting the fox to guard the henhouse." It's reassuring that Newt Gingrich deems him "honorable" and says he has "kept secrets for years." But it's even more reassuring that keeping secrets has much less urgency than it used to. The future Dellums was into is past.

■ As a special-interest balancing act, the Treasury's banking plan earns high marks. Large banks would lose their "too big to fail" protection but gain the right to diversify geographically and into brokerage, mutual funds, and insurance businesses. Smaller, riskier banks will face higher deposit-insurance premiums but will escape extinction because of what the plan didn't propose: a flat $100,000-per-person limit on deposit insurance. Federal regulators gain new powers—including the ability to close banks before they actually become insolvent—even as the number of regulatory agencies is cut in half. Unfortunately, the taxpayers' interest group has been ignored. While the costs of the present bailout now approach $200 billion (not including interest), Secretary Brady's plan does little to reduce taxpayer exposure to future bank debacles. The proposed $100,000-per-account limit for deposit insurance is no limit at all when individuals can spread their money over many banks. Among the truly meaningful reform proposals Treasury ignored are those which would give depositors a choice between insured low-yield accounts backed by riskless assets


ROGERS ©1991 THE PITTSBURGH PRESS UNITED FEATURE SYNDICATE
NOW WE KNOW WHAT HE MEANT BY A THOUSAND POINTS OF LIGHT...

(mainly Treasury securities) and *uninsured* higher-yield accounts subject to existing regulations. Taxpayers should not be at risk for the risky behavior of others.

■ WALSH WATCH: A little-noted achievement of Independent Counsel Lawrence Walsh's ongoing prosecution of the Iran–Contra case, the "temporary" assignment to which he was posted in 1986, has been to challenge the verity that a sponge will in time reach saturation point. At their estimated absorption rate of $40,000 per day, Mr. Walsh and staff sucked in another $1.2 million since our last report. His total tab to date, at least $31 million.

■ Small businesses—those with a hundred or fewer employees—generated a disproportionate share of new private-sector jobs during the Eighties. Yet the IRS is engaged in a tax-collection scam which threatens to kill this golden goose. A little-noticed section of the 1986 tax law allows the agency to reclassify subcontractors as "employees" of prime contracting firms. As a result, many small-business owners are waking up to find that they owe the IRS hundreds of thousands of dollars in Social Security and withholding taxes—taxes which were already paid by their subcontractors. Deciding who is a subcontractor and who is an outright employee is no easy matter: the legal guidelines in this area are murky and subjective, even by the standards of tax law. The IRS itself seems confused, going after certain companies while leaving identical competitors untouched. For the losers the result is catastrophic: the taxes and penalties are usually enough to put them out of business. In return for a one-time tax hit IRS auditors are depriving the government of future revenues, and workers of their livelihood.

■ Maryland's Governor Donald Schaefer, who evidently didn't read Gerald Caplan's lucid article in our February 25 issue, has gone and done the PC thing: he has commuted the prison sentences of eight "battered women," all but one of whom had killed their husbands or boyfriends. Maybe some of the women should have received lighter sentences. But *all* of them? Killing is an extreme response to assault and battery, even habitual assault and battery; the cases should at least have been reviewed individually. A prosecutor in one of them charges that Schaefer didn't even bother getting any details. One of the BWs had hired a hit man. Another shot her husband as he lay in bed. Yet another cut her former husband's corpse into seven pieces and buried them. One suspects that these incidents involved a little more than simple urgencies of self-defense, and that the juries weighed the actualities more carefully than Schaefer did.

The Bush–Gorby Affair

It's time for Mr. Bush to write
  A classic Dear John note;
The tone should be a tad contrite,
  Yet firm enough to quote.
I'm sure he understands they can't
  Keep meeting this way, so
Before the voters shout and rant,
  The guy has got to go.

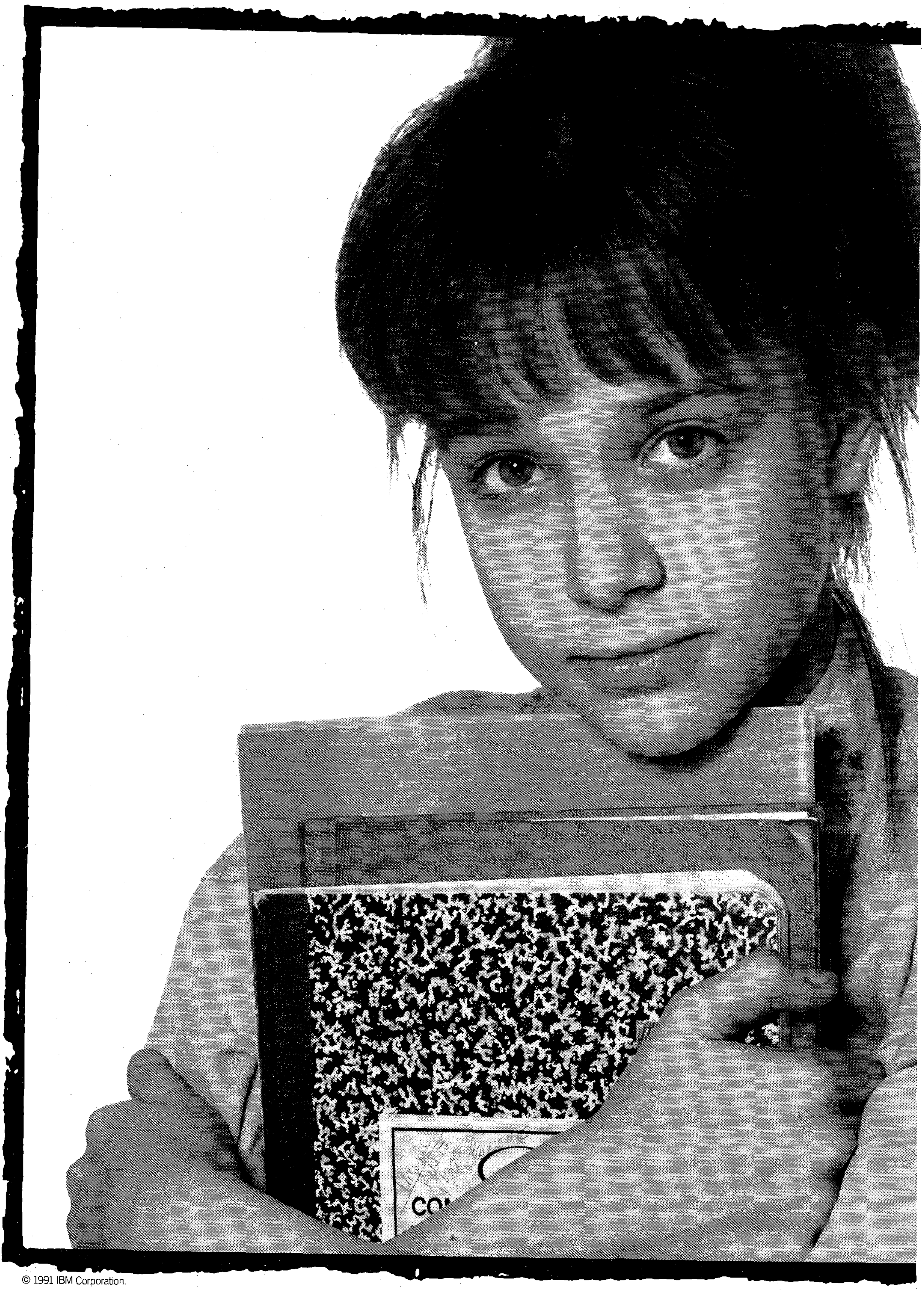
W. H. VON DREELE

■ A first-ever poll among a thousand Soviet citizens aged 18 to 25 asked this question: "Have seventy years of socialism been good or bad?" Bad, replied 74 per cent; good, said 17 per cent. "Should there be private ownership of land?" asked the poll (commissioned by *Reader's Digest* and conducted by the Institute of Sociology at the Soviet Academy of Sciences). Eighty-five per cent, yes; 10 per cent, no. Is Gorbachev helping or hindering political change? Hindering, said 51 per cent. And "Which leader do you prefer?" Thirty-nine per cent said they preferred Boris Yeltsin; Mikhail Gorbachev got 6 per cent, or about what Lyndon LaRouche gets in a typical U.S. presidential election.

■ Albania, which must hold some sort of record for cramming the biggest government into the smallest country, is undergoing changes. Opposition parties are now legal. President Ramiz Alia (as in "President" Saddam Hussein) has promised to name a new cabinet. And there have been a couple of jolly riots, in which protestors have toppled two statues of the late Enver Hoxha, who turns out to have been somewhat less popular than he told his people he was. Too bad old Hoxha didn't live to see the cops hugging the rioters.

■ Mrs. Mandela's trial for kidnapping and assault was halted because a key prosecution witness was kidnapped. An interesting defense.

■ As George Bush was deciding whether or not to go to war with Iraq, he spoke to Edmond Browning, Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church (Bush's church). Bishop Browning, who had recently returned from a National Council of Churches–sponsored "peace pilgrimage" to the Middle East, told Bush that war was "not an option that would serve anyone," ho-hum. But Bush consulted with other churchmen: Robert Schuller, Jerry Falwell, Bernard Cardinal Law, Billy Graham. Bush also consulted his own judgment of what a just war might be, a thought process he outlined in a speech to the Na-



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“Grown-ups tell us, ‘Just say no.’ That’s easy for them to say.”

“Maybe they forgot what it’s like.

“At parties, at school, kids are saying to try this or do that, and they’re my friends. I mean how many times can I hear I’m a loser.

“Sure I’m scared of drugs. It’s just there’s so much pressure. You want to say no. But you can take a lot of heat for it.”

Simple yes-no decisions aren’t so simple when they involve kids and drugs.

That’s why IBM has helped develop a computer-based, interactive video program that’s now in schools. It simulates realistic social situations, and allows kids to make choices—about drugs, about alcohol, about themselves—and to experience the consequences, but without getting hurt.

The program is sponsored by the National Federation of State High School Associations, and preliminary results have been extremely encouraging. To learn more about this program, write to us at IBM, P.O. Box 3974, Dept. 973, Peoria, IL 61614.

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tional Association of Religious Broadcasters; his criteria—just cause, declaration by a legitimate authority, war only as a last resort—tracked the criteria of just-war theorists like Aquinas. (Bush did pronounce the name of the Doctor of the Church a-KEEN-as, but it's the thoughts that count, as Aquinas might have observed.) His assumptions about the costliness of a ground war could have been erroneous though it now appears that they weren't. In any case, he made them in a spirit that was a good deal more serious intellectually than that of his bishop.

■ SENSITIVITY WATCH: Extremism in the defense of the feelings of minorities is a vice of the media as well as the Ivory Tower. Witness NBC's recent *If Looks Could Kill: The Marla Hanson Story*, about the model whose face was slashed by a thug on orders from her landlord. The thug's defense attorney, in real life black racist and conspiracy theorist Alton Maddox, in the telemovie became a smarmy white, while the prosecutor, in real life a male Hispanic, became a black woman to provide a "positive role mode" for black viewers. If minorities are so vulnerable to ugly and trivial truths, shouldn't the networks ban Maddox and his ilk from their newscasts as well? Or are the fragile "sensitivities" in fact those of screenwriters whose political correctness viscerally rejects the fact that evil comes in all colors?

■ A few NFL players got together recently to tape a video entitled *Champions for Life*. At one point in the ten-minute testimonial, Jim Burt of the San Francisco 49ers lifts his young son onto his shoulders, and the boy says, "It's great to be alive." The New York Giants' Mark Bavaro wonders how many future champions "will never see the light of day" because of the 1.5 million abortions carried out every year. Hearing of this outrage, Anna Quindlen of the *New York Times* responded with a column, "Offensive Play," tritely sermonizing on how "unseemly" and "out of bounds" it was for these players to dare to comment on such a "complicated subject." The *Times*'s Little Miss Reproductive Rights was particularly troubled by Bavaro, and she quotes a feminist friend who watched the Super Bowl hoping he'd "drop the ball." True, the video was not the most sophisticated presentation—certainly nothing to compare with Judy Collins singing "Amazing Grace" at a pro-abortion rally. But how disarming it seems compared to Miss Quindlen's complicated mind.

■ Carl Sagan's latest exercise in media hype, "massive agricultural failures in North America" arising from oil fires in the Persian Gulf, has run afoul of reality. Far from precipitating a vegetarian apocalypse of hemispheric scope, the soot plumes from Saddam Hussein's pyromaniacal escapade have been raining out of the sky scarcely five hundred miles downwind. Having promised us a global big chill, Sagan has delivered instead sporadic black rain in Teheran. What gives? Has Sagan forsaken his computer and reverted to basing his forecasts on the entrails of sheep? Could be. The chap from Jordan who recently seconded him on *60 Minutes* turns out not to be a climate expert, but a physician specializing in liver complaints.

■ Should Jordan's King Hussein have a *crise de foie*, we respectfully advise him to take some Vichy water and consult an astrophysicist.

■ The IRS complains that Americans aren't filing their returns as fast as usual. That's because it's impossible to figure out your taxes when you have to read lips.

■ Oh, and Representative Guarini of New Jersey grumbles that federal spending on benefits programs is growing at an "excremental rate." Couldn't have put it better ourselves.

Rx from the Slump Doctors

It's so simple, really: When
All the grunts sail home again,
We, in manic millions, will
Mob the marts and malls until
Good times roll and Mr. Bush
Starts campaigning with a *whoosh*.

W. H. VON DREELE

Peace and War

AS WE go to press, it appears that the liberation of Kuwait has been accomplished. By the time you read this Saddam Hussein may or may not cling to some form of power; but his fate is almost certainly sealed.

And so it is instructive to see how close the allied effort came to foundering on Mikhail Gorbachev's last-minute bid for a second Nobel Peace Prize. That bid failed, owing to Iraqi evasions and to the resoluteness of President Bush, who rightly rejected the phony and dangerous "solutions" that the Soviet diplomacy represented. The Mother of All Diplomatic Fiascos was averted, and the Mother of All Battles began.

It is important to bear in mind what the Soviet mediation effort really meant, lest there be any illusions that the ground assault could have been avoided. No one should believe that the diplomatic issue involved only a few minor clauses, or this or that technical point, or matters of timing.

The Soviets had a strategic interest in saving Saddam Hussein, in order to get credit for it in the Arab world, to distance themselves from the American and allied enterprise, and to cultivate their traditional, more radical constituency in the Middle East. Our strategic interest was completely the opposite. *Our* friends in the Arab world were terrified of any outcome, diplomatic or military, that would have left the Iraqi threat intact. Such an ambiguous outcome would have necessitated a larger or longer-term American military presence in the region, in circumstances of potential Iraqi intimidation and weakened U.S. credibility that would have made it decidedly uncomfortable for us to stay. Such an outcome would have been seriously destabilizing.

The allied strategic interest thus required a clear-cut, unmistakable, unambiguous defeat of Saddam Hussein, in order to discredit totally the radicalism he represented. This was not an argument for expanding the war aims beyond the UN resolutions and the liberation of Kuwait; it meant that Saddam had to be expelled from Kuwait in a manner that would help remove the larger strategic threat of which his invasion of Kuwait was but a part. There could be no doubt as to who won and who lost—and it had to be rendered obvious even to the most emotionally overwrought *fellah* in the Arab street. Ambiguous face-saving formulas, or even prolonged "negotiations" with Saddam over the terms for withdrawal—which the Soviet diplomacy most definitely foreshadowed—posed a serious risk of permitting his political recovery down the road.

Perhaps Saddam would have been undermined at home anyway by any withdrawal from Kuwait. But he has been a resourceful fellow, and his political recovery was not a tolerable risk. It would be hard to justify the sacrifices that have been made if, six months from now, we found that the strategic menace remained.

It was a just cause, and a just war. It was not the time to flinch. The President deflected and deflated the Soviet diplomacy, and the allies insisted on their demands in the strictest terms.

Also deflated—one can at least hope—are State Department illusions about how constructive a role the Soviets can play in the Middle East. The Baker–Bessmertnykh joint communiqué of January 29 was a compendium of errors—reaffirming the linkage to the Palestinian issue, promising "mutual efforts" in partnership with the Soviets, pledging a ceasefire in the Gulf in risky circumstances short of clear-cut victory. But its most obvious error, from today's vantage point, was its implicit faith that the Soviets would be co-opted to behave constructively in the Gulf crisis by such positive inducements. Instead, the Soviets continued, without interruption, both their propaganda in the Arab world criticizing our bombing campaign and their unhelpful mediation efforts. There is a straight line from the January 29 U.S.–Soviet communiqué to the diplomatic mess the President narrowly escaped from by letting the ground war proceed.

There are valuable lessons here for the future, and not only lessons about the Persian Gulf.

On the Moscow Homefront

FOR MORE than four years, the Soviet Union was the scene of *perestroika*, an attempt to create the conditions for economic dynamism while preserving the country's social and political structure intact. This attempt is now widely acknowledged to have failed. In response, steps are being taken to reinforce Soviet society's basic totalitarian institutions. The result is that the country is at a ghostly crossroads with a discredited past and a bleak future.

Recent weeks have produced no shortage of disturbing images—tanks crushing unarmed demonstrators outside the Vilnius television tower, army patrols on the streets of major cities, a riot outside the central Moscow telegraph office as Soviet citizens learned that their 50- and 100-ruble notes were about to become worthless. But what is most disturbing is the underlying realization that the Soviet system, which by any rational measure is doomed by history, has no intention of releasing its cadaverous hold and that its destructive possibilities are still almost unlimited.

Asked to define socialism, Karl Marx wrote that it consists of one thing, the abolition of private property. It is a tribute to the futility of the reform process in the Soviet Union that it has included everything but the introduction of private property.

The Gorbachev reform effort has witnessed a break between two aspects of totalitarian rule which were historically closely connected—the imaginary world of Communist ideology and the Soviet Union's social and economic structure. Under the impact of *glasnost* the world of the ideology was shattered, but the Soviet Union's totalitarian structure continued to function and is now being reinforced. This could presage a hair-raising attempt to reanimate the ideology, because it is only the ideology that can lend any legitimacy to such an oppressive structure.

The regime's first attempt to strengthen the Soviet Union's socialist structure has taken the form of intensified efforts to preserve the empire. In a society that must decentralize and eventually break up into its natural units if it is to have a chance to prosper and survive, the regime's efforts have been directed toward inducing the republics to sign a new union treaty which would both legitimize their dependent status and place the adjudication of disputes in the hands of the union.

Why did the central authorities permit Soviet troops to open fire last month on civilians in Lithuania and Latvia? One possibility is that it wanted to frighten the rebellious republics into signing this treaty. But the spectacle of the Soviet army supporting an unknown "Committee of National Salvation" in its effort to usurp the authority of the democratically elected Latvian and Lithuanian parliaments is indication enough of the kind of autonomy for the republics that the center is contemplating.

As well as attempting to strengthen the hold of the empire, the Soviet authorities are steadily reinforcing the system of central planning, which they were supposed to be abandoning in favor of a "controlled market economy." Last September, Gorbachev issued an order to the republics to respect existing state contracts. At the end of the year, he invalidated any arrangement between local bodies that might interfere with these contracts and also ordered enterprises to provide the same level of deliveries to state enterprises as in the previous year, thus reproducing the discredited economic plan for 1990 in 1991.

These measures have now been supplemented by a monetary reform which effectively confiscates a large portion of the population's wealth. For it is the rare Soviet citizen who can show that his entire hoard of cash was obtained legally. Worse, a new decree authorizes the interior ministry and the KGB to enter freely and search the premises of any factory or enterprise and to remove from banks and credit

RIGHT DATA

The Bush Plan

A DAY AFTER releasing the budget President Bush outlined his economic game plan to the Economic Club of New York:

George Bush: *"Encouraging economic growth means reducing federal borrowing . . . That's why we sent Congress a budget proposal that holds spending growth below the rate of inflation—the lowest increase in five years."*

Right Data: Promises, promises. A year ago Mr. Bush also promised to cut spending. Now the Administration is saying that real federal spending will increase 6.8 per cent this year, the second largest increase in 15 years. And the war is not to blame: non-defense spending is expected to increase by a staggering 11 per cent. More importantly, federal spending as a percentage of GNP is expected to rise from 23.2 per cent in 1990 to 25.1 per cent this year, undoing all the gains made during the Reagan years.

GB: *"But thanks to the budget reforms that began last fall, the deficit will be virtually eliminated by 1995."*

RD: Five years ago Gramm–Rudman supposedly set us on a course for a zero deficit by 1991. If we're lucky—if the Administration's rosy economic scenario proves accurate—then the 1991 deficit will reach $318 billion, or nearly $100 billion above the previous high. The much-heralded spending caps in last fall's budget agreement are undermined by provisions that permit entitlements to rise without limit in response to changing economic conditions, budget "emergencies," or technical "re-estimates." And a recent study by the National Center for Policy Analysis concludes that the agreement's $166-billion tax hike will depress the economy far more than the Administration is willing to admit.

GB: *"To ensure economic growth, this Administration will also redouble its efforts to weed out counterproductive government regulations."*

RD: So far Mr. Bush's efforts have brought on the biggest increase in regulatory activism since the Carter years. The Americans with Disabilities Act requires companies with 15 or more workers to make extensive accommodations for disabled customers and employees. The new Clean Air Act adds $25 to $35 billion to the $100 billion already spent annually on pollution controls. The enlightened policies of the Reagan years have been replaced by something akin to trust-busting at the FTC. The headcount at federal regulatory agencies, after falling by 13,000 during the 1980s, is slated to increase by 7,500 this year, according to Murray Weidenbaum.

GB: *"When you look at what we put out there yesterday, you'll see that defense spending is down."*

RD: In fact defense spending has been falling, in real terms, since 1989; outlays for new weapons and R&D have been falling since 1986. Despite the war, defense spending is expected to account for only 21.2 per cent of total federal outlays this year, the lowest share since before World War II.

GB: *"We must also renew our investments in America's future . . . And that means . . . investing in the infrastructure of our transportation system."*

RD: And that means millions spent studying magnetic levitation technology, intelligent vehicle/highway systems, bicycle-path planning, the effects of jet lag, and other "transportation-related" programs. —ED RUBENSTEIN organizations details of their financial transactions. It is not difficult to see that this would have a "chilling effect" on private economic activity.

From the beginning of the Gorbachev era, there has been an irresistible tendency to see Gorbachev not for what he is—a product of the Communist system trying to save it—but for what we wanted him to be: a genuine democrat intent on introducing the rule of law into the Soviet Union. Moscow is rife with rumors of a military *coup d'état* and the resurgence of the "hard-liners" in the Soviet leadership. But such talk fails to address the possibility that the unchanging Soviet leadership is merely making the adjustments that it needs in order to secure its own power. With his popularity at an all-time low, Gorbachev has little to gain from the free choice of Soviet citizens. He needs the repressive possibilities of the Soviet system. Recent events do no more than confirm that he has come to that realization.

The Right Strategy

IN AN EARLIER time the Administration's plan to stimulate energy production would have been called an energy "policy." Today it's merely an energy "strategy." The rhetorical demotion reflects the consistent failure of government intervention in the energy marketplace.

The recent plunge in oil prices is perhaps the strongest indictment of centralized controls. After all, 4.5 million barrels per day of Iraqi and Kuwaiti crude have been forced off the market. A similar oil shock brought gas lines and shortages in 1974. But today's free-market environment has produced exactly the opposite—an oil glut and gasoline prices that are lower today than when Iraq invaded Kuwait. When oil prices skyrocketed in August, 250 million clever Americans decided to drive a little less, many commercial vehicle fleets were retrofitted to run on alternative fuels, and homeowners doubled the rate at which they converted from oil to gas heat. All this without the benefit of an energy "policy."

By easing up on environmental, tax, and regulatory restrictions the Bush plan builds on Ronald Reagan's legacy. President Bush could have gone further and abolished the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, the International Energy Agency, and the Natural Gas Act, each one a vestige of a now discredited form of economic organization. To his credit Mr. Bush rejected mandatory mileage standards for automobiles, the current rage among environmental and conservation groups. Nuclear power would get a long overdue boost, pleasing those concerned with our dependence on foreign oil.

Price controls—even the authority to reimpose them in an "emergency"—are universally opposed. Higher market prices are universally viewed as the most efficient program for conservation and increased domestic production. Energy malaise has given way to a realistic appreciation of what an unfettered market can do.

In short, we've come a long way since Jimmy Carter gave that speech with his sweater on.

Black Leadership

"I TELL YOUNG BLACKS, don't let your blackness, your minority status, be a problem to you. Let it be a problem to somebody else. If you work hard, do the best you can, take advantage of every opportunity that's put in front of you, success will come your way."

The speaker is not Ronald Reagan, not even Jack Kemp, but General Colin Powell, in a remarkable new documentary interview produced by the Blackwell Corporation and just released by Films for the Humanities. The general's words are striking precisely because they stand in such stark contrast to the ethos offered up by the black establishment, and we take them as a hopeful sign of important changes in the American landscape. It is no coincidence, for example, that Jesse Jackson's star has waned with the rise of Doug Wilder in Virginia and Colin Powell in the Pentagon; indeed, Governor Wilder has put great distance between himself and the shadow senator from the District of Columbia, or whatever Mr. Jackson is calling himself these days.

As for General Powell, there have been many respectable military chiefs in the past two or three decades, but, if things go the way they appear to be going, he will be the first who can claim to have won a war. Far from discrediting him, the fact that he will have done it with an all-volunteer military in which black Americans are represented disproportionately only confirms his emphasis on the primacy of achievement; we find it interesting, though hardly surprising, that at the very moment blacks are proving themselves as capable and patriotic as their white fellow Americans their patriotism is being called into question not by the Jesse Helmses but by the Jesse Jacksons. And we suspect that many are starting to ask whether that is not because these latter have a vested interest in their failure.

Milking Milken

IMAGINE an institution which follows one set of rules in public, but bends them on the sly; which takes positions for all the world to see, while angling for secret deals; which says one thing, then does (or tries to do) another. No, it's not the junk-bond division of Drexel Burnham Lambert under the sway of Michael Milken; it's the federal judiciary which, after sentencing him, has recommended the terms of his parole.

Last year, District Judge Kimba Wood slapped the financier with a ten-year jail sentence—an average sentence for a crime of violence these days; astonishing for a white-collar crime, even the crime of making more money than the Wall Street establishment. Last month, Judge Wood, putting a different spin on her severity, suggested that Milken be eligible for parole after only 36 months in the slammer.

The potential reduction in Milken's jail time came cloaked in a dense discussion of the gravity of his offenses. If he "caused" losses of greater than $1 million, as the prosecution maintains, then he would have to wait at least forty months. If the total loss is less than a million (Judge Wood puts a $318,000 price tag on his derelictions), then the law allows him to get out earlier.

In fact, however, the months and years being bandied about have to do mainly with the degree to which Milken is willing to cooperate with the Feds. Ivan Boesky, who fingered him, was sprung after two years, and even the prosecution admits that Boesky's crimes were greater than Milken's (they actually were crimes). Milken pleaded guilty to six counts of securities fraud but refused to cooperate until he had been sentenced. Hence the ten years dumped on his shoulders. If he now cooperates as efficaciously as Boesky did, his time will be shrunk by a third.

Apart from the question of ethics, the danger of such procedures is that the guilty party will tell, not the truth, but what his jailers wish to hear. This danger exists in the multitude of quotidian prosecutions in which the state uses plea bargains and the testimony of "turned" defendants to make its case. It is a risk worth running, however, in prosecutions where the definitions of the crimes are clear and strict, and the rules of evidence are traditional and widely recognized. In a field like securities law, where legal and economic doctrine mutates as fast as an AIDS virus, the stick-and-carrot method of pursuing testimony amounts to a prosecutors' license to get whomever they want, however it's easiest to get him.

Such methods have already brought Michael Milken to what is called justice. They should not be used, on him, to ensnare the next victim—or the next three or four.

Come Home, America

Like the sailor on the bowsprit
  Lowering an arm
Toward the flailing waif resisting
  Davy Jones's charm,
George McGovern threw a lifeline
  At the party pros
As, from boondocks to the Beltway,
  Everybody froze.

W. H. VON DREELE

Resisting Temptation

THE SEVENTH, and typically acrimonious, assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) has come to an end in Canberra, Australia. If one believed its press releases, the Council has 317 member churches representing nearly all the Protestant and Orthodox Christians in the world. In fact, the Council includes a declining segment of world Protestantism, and the maddeningly fragmented churches of Orthodoxy are only tenuously related to it. It is tempting to dismiss the WCC as irrelevant.

The claim that Canberra was "an assembly of world Christianity" is pathetically pretentious. Of the approximately 1.5 billion Christians in the world, 900 million are Roman Catholic and the majority of the others belong to the fast-growing evangelical and pentecostal groups, which decline to have anything to do with the WCC. The Council today is no more than a vestige of the modern ecumenical movement launched by North Atlantic Protestants at the World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh in 1910.

The Council has had its moments of greater significance. During the cold war it became a valuable political platform for Orthodox churches parroting the line of their Communist masters. Its credibility was boosted following Vatican Council II when there was talk of the Catholic Church joining the WCC. The Vatican, however, soon distanced itself, for reasons both theological and political, preferring to pursue its ecumenical agenda in "bilateral" relations with other churches. And so it seems that history has left the WCC behind as an institutional relic of the failed dreams of liberal Protestantism.

The Canberra assembly went almost unnoticed in the world press. The big stories, so to speak, were eminently ignorable. Feminists demanded more power in the bureaucracy. Some theologians urged that Christians should now invoke the pagan gods and goddesses that missionaries of an earlier era, believing that Christ is Lord, had valiantly battled. And there was raucous debate over whether the Council should simply condemn the allied policies in the Persian Gulf or formally adopt a position of pacifist opposition to all wars—making allowance, of course, for liberation struggles against capitalist imperialism. The WCC, once again, seemed to be inviting dismissal as a tattered sideshow that has run long over its time.

The invitation should be declined. Like its old-line member churches in American Protestantism, the WCC, for all its decrepitude and disarray, remains an important factor in world Christianity. For churches in countries of the post-Communist East, the Council is a useful meeting place with Western Christians. It may even be that those churches could restore a degree of theological orthodoxy and political sanity to the WCC. In addition, for millions of conservative Christians in this country, the churches associated with the WCC will continue to be spiritual home. That is where they will continue to "fight the good fight." All who care about the course of Christianity in our time should wish them well. Despite the determined efforts of the WCC and its member churches to demonstrate their irrelevance, attention must be paid.

Margot Fonteyn, R I P

TO INTERVIEWERS' questions about the basis of her splendid career, Margot Fonteyn would reply with characteristic understatement, "I was in the right place at the right time." What she left out was the first term: "the right *person*" in the right and-so-ons. Whether it was as the 16-year-old fledgling swan in 1935, soon to take over the top slot at the equally fledgling Sadler's Wells (later the Royal) Ballet from the departing Alicia Markova; or, 14 years later, the ballerina in her prime leading the company's smashing U.S. tour with her Aurora in *Sleeping Beauty*; or, another 12 years later, the dancer beginning to think of retirement but accepting the challenge of a flamboyant Russian refugee half her age and forming with him one of the most brilliant and durable artistic partnerships of our time, Margot Fonteyn was unquestionably the right person on the spot.

Her greatest successes were in dramatic roles, not abstract ballets, but not through any lack of technique. If her bravura work was not as spectacular as some of the Russian (and, later, American) ballerinas', her line and the perfection of her *pointes* made up for it. Fortunately, a number of her performances are recorded on film, including her Fifties signature piece, *Ondine*, and her Sixties signature piece (with Nureyev), *Marguerite and Armand*, so that those who never saw her onstage can see, and enjoy, for themselves.

Onstage and off, her life was proof that a *prima ballerina* need not be a prima donna, and the quiet manner of her death was a final, characteristic understatement.

NOTES & ASIDES

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

As a longtime reader of *NR*, I've enjoyed your ongoing flirtation with abstruse English words.

After learning the meaning of "deipnosophist" the other day, I realized that I had not seen it in *NR*. One would expect it to pop up all over the place.

How do you explain this lapse?

Puzzled,
Hal Munn
Alhambra, Calif.

Dear Mr. Munn: The word defines someone "skilled at table talk." It is used rarely for the obvious reasons. Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

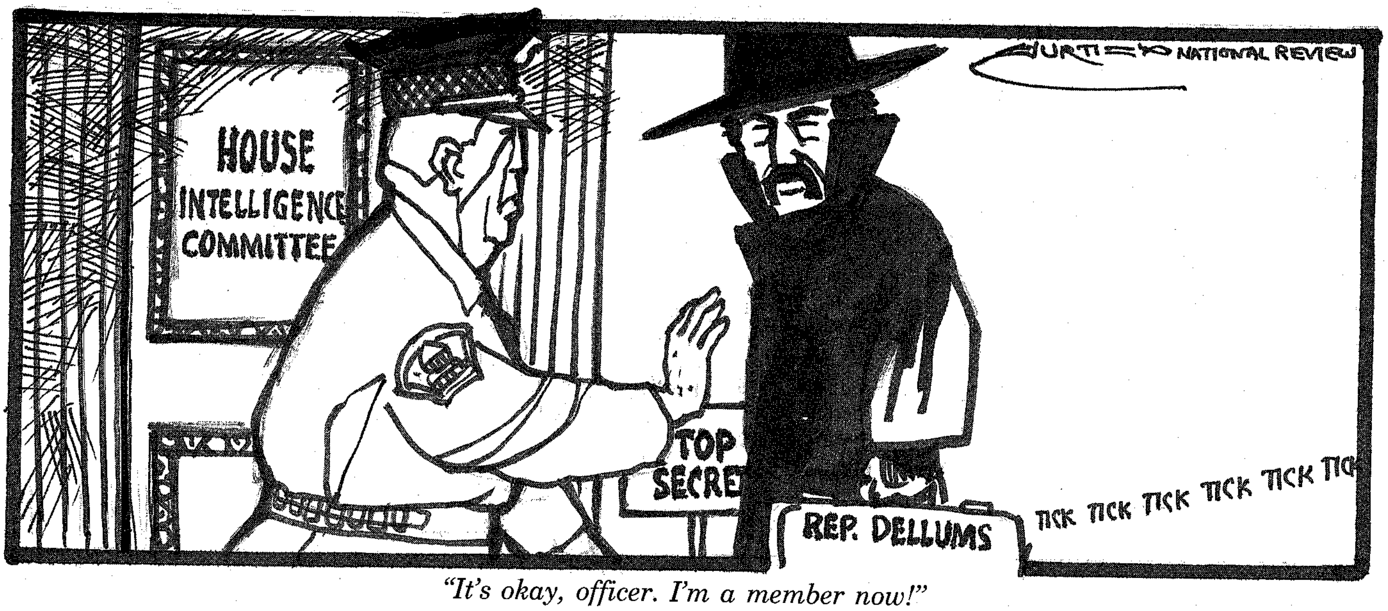
In your September 3, 1990, column, "On the Right," you rightly ask: "Who Is Responsible?" for the increase in deposit insurance in 1980 and the S&L mess in general. You say that you "have pieced together parts of the story, and spin-controllers are out there actively attempting to crank up tendentious versions."

You are so right in your feeling that somehow the country still does not have the whole story, even though volumes of "tendentious versions" have been written about it. It is perhaps in the spin-controllers' interest to suppress the story's very first piece because it would cast an entirely different light on your question of who is responsible. Well, let me supply the missing piece.

Effective June 1, 1978, the Federal Reserve Board changed its Regulation Q, which controlled the interest rate that S&Ls and savings banks were allowed to pay on passbook savings. Up to that date, the permitted rate had remained at 5.5 per cent for a very long time, guaranteeing the thrifts a stable, assured cost of funds which they could safely lend to homebuyers. It was a unique arrangement. It allowed them to use passbook savings—in effect, call deposits—to make long-term fixed-rate mortgages without running into a disastrous timing mismatch between their assets and liabilities. And it was the thrifts' fixed cost of money imposed by Regulation Q that was the key.

So what did the change in Regulation Q do? It permitted the thrifts to sell six-month savings certificates of $10,000 or more at a rate of interest 0.25 per cent higher than six-month Treasury bills at the date of issue.

The very small minimum amount and short term of the new certificate made it possible for most sav-



"It's okay, officer. I'm a member now!"

ers to buy it by simply switching their passbook savings (paying 5.5 per cent) into the new floating-rate instruments. And for the thrifts, it meant that their cost of funds began to float with six-month Treasury bills.

Behind this change were the chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, G. William Miller, a Jimmy Carter appointee, and the presidents of the FHLBB, FDIC, and FSLIC—none of them a banker. They apparently thought that the mid-1978 economy was approaching a cyclical peak (which it was) and, as good servants of a populist President, they wanted to prevent disintermediation, the normal temporary shift of some thrift deposits (and thus mortgage funds) to commercial banks, which, at the peak of a cycle, would usually pay well above 5.5 per cent for term deposits. Disintermediation did pose a problem for the housing industry at cyclical peaks. Its impact, though, was limited by the large size ($100,000 minimum) and the relatively long terms of certificates of deposit that the commercial banks were allowed to sell.

The results of the change in Regulation Q went far beyond the modest intentions of its authors.

Thrift depositors with as little as $10,000 in their passbook accounts went for a massive switch of their existing savings (paying 5.5 per cent) into the new floating-rate certificates, whose interest reached 10 per cent before 1978 was out. Within the first two years this nearly tripled the thrifts' cost of funds, while most of their assets remained stuck in long-term fixed-rate mortgages paying around 5.5 to 7.5 per cent. The industry found itself sinking into an ocean of red ink.

Moreover, the new high rates paid by thrifts became a major factor in pushing all rates higher and, by keeping the supply of mortgage funds plentiful, in helping to extend the business cycle at a high plateau into early 1980. Thus, what followed was a horrendous economic and political fallout: the overheated economy of 1979 and early 1980, the historic spike in interest rates and inflation of 1980–81, and the disastrous attempt by the Carter White House to stop it through total credit controls in March 1980. The so-called 1980 "recession" really was an artificially contrived effort to induce a downturn and get a recovery under way in time for the November 1980 election. It cost Carter his re-election and made the real recession, when it finally hit in 1982, so bad. Predictably, the spin-controllers immediately named it "the Reagan recession."

And finally, by 1980, the thrifts were losing so much money so fast that they mounted a political campaign for higher federal deposit insurance and permission to invest outside the mortgage field. They thought that they could "grow themselves out of the losses" on their mortgage assets by investing large sums at high rates.

These were the early facts. What remains unexplained is: How could the authors of the Regulation Q change and, later, thrift managers be so ignorant, or naïve, or lacking in professional advice, that they went for it so blindly? Or were they being advised, or pressured, or cajoled by those who had their own special aims—like the Carter Administration; or commercial banks and Wall Street brokerages, which took over most of the mortgage industry and created a huge new market for trading mortgage-backed securities; or just plain crooks, including those in Washington?

I have been following this whole story professionally as the chief investment officer for a group of insurance companies and would be glad to fill you in on any further details that may be of interest.

Sincerely,
Tadeusz Kozlowski, CFA
Maplewood, N.J.

Dear Mr. Kozlowski: Surely you have told me all? My thanks. Cordially, **—WFB**

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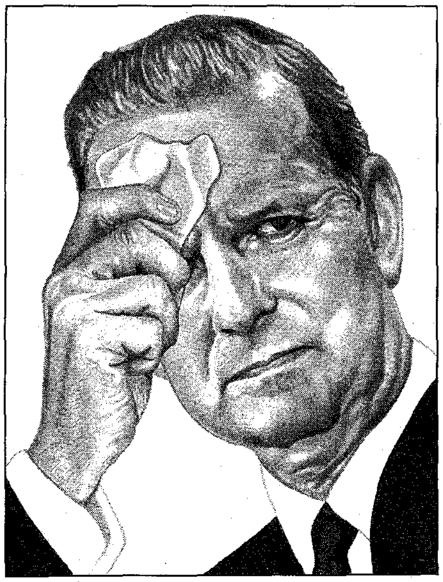
ON THE SCENE

Mr. Baker Stumbles

WILLIAM McGURN



Bonnie Gardner

WASHINGTON, D.C.

WHAT IS James Baker up to? On Valentine's Day he summoned Zalman Shoval, Israel's envoy to the United States, to his office after Shoval had shot off his mouth that Jerusalem would "demand" more aid from Uncle Sam. Dumb thing to say, of course, and Baker rapped him sharply on the knuckles.

Normally that would have been that. But the next day Baker personally took up the matter with George Bush, and by 5 P.M. that Friday the White House released a statement calling the remarks "outrageous" and saying Bush had sent a critical letter to Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir.

The surprising interjection of the President did not go unnoticed inside the Beltway; these are kind of minor flaps usually left to State to sort out. But Baker had insisted, and for whatever reason Bush went along. It's no secret that the Secretary of State is no great fan of Israel. But getting the unusually personal White House rebuke of Ambassador Shoval was less a signal to Israel than a sign to the rest of the Administration that—whatever the performance of Dick Cheney and Colin Powell—Jim Baker still calls the shots on foreign policy.

That was the message sent. But the message received may be that the Baker honeymoon is over. In the two weeks leading up to the Shoval incident Baker had been the subject of three major blunders: calling for aid to Iraq before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, even if Saddam remained in power (when Henry Kissinger made a similar offer to Hanoi during the Vietnam War, it was done secretly and at least had the virtue of being a bribe); blind-siding the President the day of the State of the Union Address with a joint statement with Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, which was interpreted by our allies as offering a ceasefire; and briefing Syrian President Hafez al-Assad last fall in Damascus, which the *New York Times* story charged may have led to the killing of three informants who had infiltrated Syrian-backed terror outfits.

"It's not that Baker hasn't made mistakes before," says Michael Ledeen of the American Enterprise Institute. "But this is the first time they have been explicitly labeled as such."

James Addison Baker III is not accustomed to such treatment. From the start Baker has infuriated conservatives by assiduously courting the press. Even more infuriating to loyal Reaganites was that it worked. "A political genius unencumbered by creed or convictions," began a *New Yorker* profile last year. "Smooth, shrewd, tough, and coolly ambitious" was the way the *Washington Post* put it. "Pragmatism over Zeal," agreed the *New York Times*. If Fred Barnes did call him "America's Most Overrated Man," well, that was the exception that proved the rule.

Indeed, Baker has managed to breeze past mistakes that would have felled greater men. While the rest of the Reagan Administration was hounded for even the "mere appearance" of impropriety, Baker managed to hold onto millions of dollars in investments in a bank that had considerable exposure in Third World debt at a time when he was designing remedies to rescue these countries (and by extension these banks) from their lending follies. More substantive was his role, as Secretary of the Treasury, in driving down the dollar, which helped along the stock-market crash, as the Council of Economic Advisors pointed out. He continues to profit from the double standard; reporters who routinely charge the Reagan Administration with responsibility for the savings-and-loan debacle somehow never seem to mention Baker's role at Treasury. "He's a genius at taking credit for the good things and distancing himself from the bad," says one Administration official. "You've got to give him that."

You have to give him a little more. Even his harshest critics concede that Baker is not without managerial flair. A former campaign official remembers with awe Baker's skill at chairing meetings: reviewing the policy options with people of sharply divergent views, reaching a decision, explaining to those whose advice had been rejected why he had done so and then instructing the victorious side what he expected to be done in the next 24 hours. Boom, boom, boom, with a minimum of ruffled feelings. "You have no idea how rare that is in Washington," says one participant.

Like OMB head Richard Darman, another technocrat, Baker's intelligence and skills served him well so long as he was executing policy rather than instituting it; he was masterful, for example, in helping to assemble the coalition for a war (he had hinted to various congressmen) he was not really behind. His finest hour, in fact, was in Geneva in the week leading up to the deadline, when he stood firm in meetings with Tariq Aziz.

His forays into policy-making, by contrast, have often been just this side

---

Mr. McGurn is NR*'s Washington bureau chief.*

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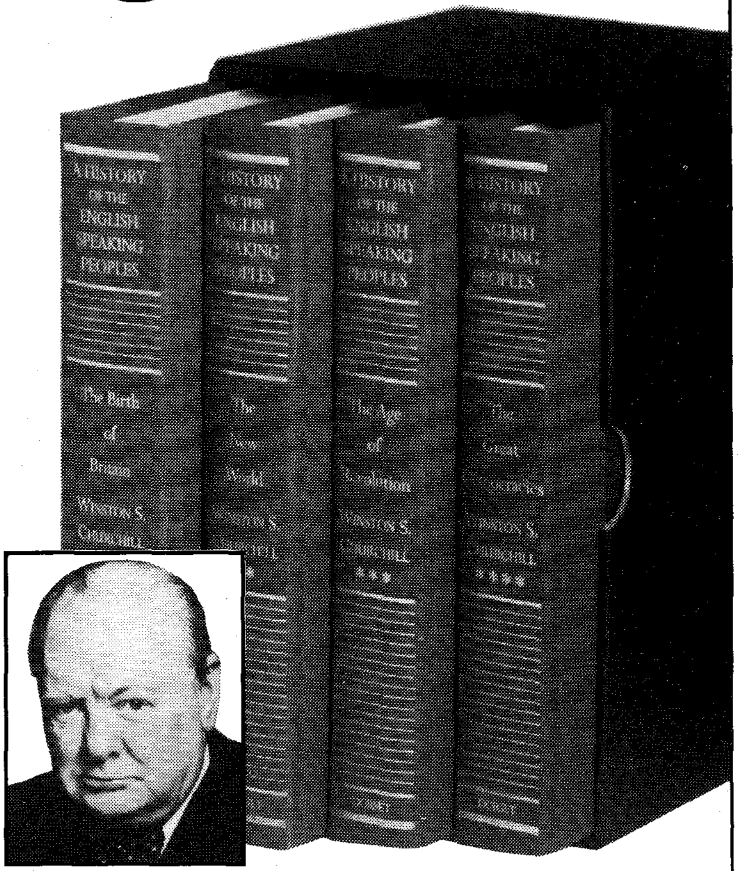

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of disaster. Take the joint communiqué issued with Bessmertnykh. The State Department line is that it was no more than a restatement of intentions to reassure an increasingly nervous alliance. In fact, it was just the opposite. For one thing, it suggested the same linkage that is at the center of the Soviet peace proposal. Worse still, it caught Bush by surprise and set off anxiety attacks in the capitals of our Mideast allies, who got the impression that America was on the verge of pulling out before the job was finished. In particular it has forced the Arabs to soften their own terms; after all, they cannot be seen to be less pro-Arab than their partners.

Of course, the worst mistake of all was the signals his department was sending Saddam prior to the invasion. According to a transcript made public by the Iraqi embassy (and not disputed by the U.S.) one week before the invasion and at the very moment that U.S. intelligence was warning about a massive Iraqi buildup on the Kuwaiti border, Ambassador April Glaspie in effect was telling Saddam that the U.S. would do nothing. "Mr. President," she said, "I know you need funds. We understand that and are of the opinion that you should have the opportunity to rebuild your country, but what we hold no opinion about are inter-Arab disputes, such as your border disagreement with Kuwait."

Connie Chung brought up the Glaspie statement on *Face to Face*; Baker's response was unconvincing and dishonorable. He first distanced himself from his own ambassador and implied he hadn't really kept up with what she was telling the Iraqis, due to the high volume of cables and what not. But he did concede that Glaspie had correctly reiterated State's position, making it all the more difficult to escape the conclusion that Saddam could only interpret this as a go-ahead. "No, I don't think she was giving him the green light," Baker replied. "I mean, that is not—I'm confident that she was not intending to give him the green light, and what I'm saying is I would interpret that to mean she was expressing the fact that there were no formal security guarantees, but beyond that, I can't answer you."

He stumbled around a few times, as the interviewer pressed the point home. For the first time, Jim Baker appeared to squirm. And I think Connie was enjoying it. □

From the *Souk*

DONALD KIRK

UNCLE SAMS
BAR

Tim Bower

Amman, Jordan

SAMIR named his little hole-in-the-wall restaurant "Uncle Sam's" when he opened it 15 years ago—apparently to try to entice some of the crowd from the American embassy across the street. Now "Uncle Sam's" flaunts poster-size portraits of Saddam Hussein (holding a little girl in his lap) and Yasir Arafat in the window. "Sammy," as he likes to be known, is not at all apologetic when an American asks him about the display of loyalty. "I am a businessman," he says with a sly smile. "I have to be careful." He stops smiling, though, when the visitor asks him if he's thought of pasting up a portrait of President Bush. "You are joking," he says cautiously, "but it is not a joke to the people on the streets here."

And yet a strange kind of peace has descended on a capital roiled periodically by demonstrators parading through the streets on behalf of the man who has become a latter-day hero figure to dispossessed Palestinians. It's all very well to deify Saddam Hussein for his big talk about demanding a Palestinian homeland, but the propaganda gets scary when it carries the danger of dragging Jordan and the Palestinians into the war. It is one thing for Jordan's King Hussein (his picture is also up there in Sammy's window) to castigate the U.S. for the bombing of Baghdad, but it's quite another to risk going to war yourself. "Jihad"—holy war—by all means. A real shooting war—not likely, not for the Palestinian bourgeoisie that has settled comfortably into this "Hashemite Kingdom" after the expulsion from their lands and the bloodshed of the "Black September," 21 years ago, when some of the hotheads thought they could make this land their own.

The fear of a spreading war, though, is never far below the surface. There is a sense of volatility here that even King Hussein, with his shrewd knack for playing all sides, may not in the end be able to hold in check. In the offices of recently prosperous companies, in restaurants half emptied by the new concern about where the money's coming from, the talk centers not on the "crimes" of the Americans but on the most likely formula for stopping the nonsense and getting back to work. The conclusion is inescapable: Saddam Hussein will get out of Kuwait just in time to avoid self-destruction. The Americans will turn Kuwait into their own neat little mini-colony, with a curiosity of an emir in his palace, and U.S. and British troops will glare in perpetuity across some "demilitarized zone" at Saddam's bowed but unbeaten Republican Guards.

It is almost a happy ending to hear a pair of dark-suited Palestinian businessmen smilingly discuss it one morning. There is an implication that life will not only go on but perhaps even get better—especially for a kingdom that has prospered with the flight of Palestinians from the West Bank and Israel, with nearly two decades of

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Mr. Kirk is a correspondent for USA Today.

turmoil in the onetime banking center of Beirut and even with the bloody demise of the Shah in Iran. With Kuwait freed, the danger of war engulfing the region would be over. At the same time, those overstuffed Kuwaitis could never exercise the economic power they once had—rich though they still are. Some of the business would inevitably come around to Amman.

But nobody here believes in the roseate view that perhaps Washington will turn a sympathetic ear to some of the Palestinian demands after getting rid of Saddam, or at least ridding Kuwait of Saddam's troops. Nobody thinks President Bush has already shown a healthy degree of independence from Israeli demands by keeping Israel out of the war and even ignoring some of Israel's more exhorbitant demands for "billions" in military and economic aid. Nobody can quite imagine how "Palestine" will ever emerge as a shining new nation in its own right short of a compromise peace that leads to the "peace conference" that Washington has so long opposed.

For here there is no doubt about the concept of "linkage." There is no question, from the Arab markets in the heart of the old city to the new supermarkets and cafés up the slopes on which modern Amman is built, that the war for the region will break out again and again if Washington ignores Palestine. Palestinians may admit that Saddam is a hypocrite, that he has espoused their cause as a propaganda ploy, but they view the Saudis, the Egyptians, even the Syrians as greater hypocrites. "Their people are all on our side," says one Palestinian with a sweeping gesture. "Their leaders are only politicians." At the bottom of the Egyptian and Syrian defection, in this and all conversations, is Saudi money. "King Fahd thinks he can buy anyone," the businessman goes on. "He will pay the higher price."

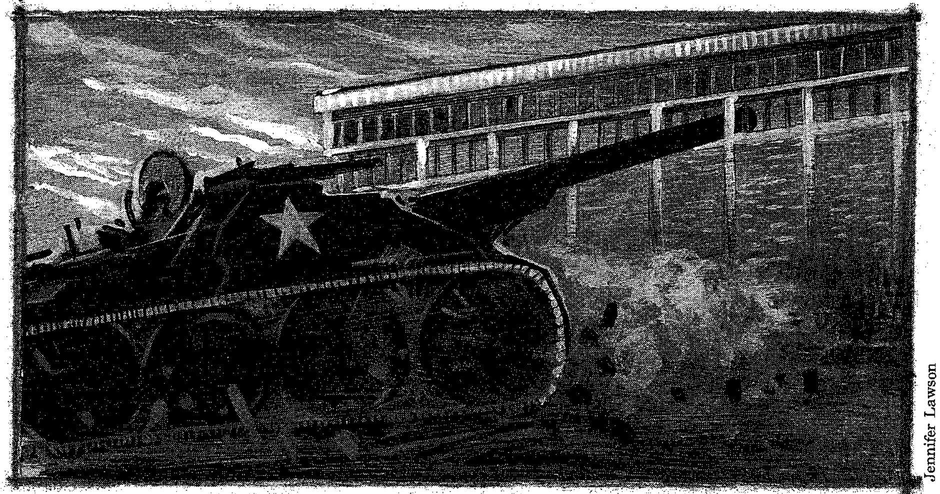
Who is going to gain in the end from this war—Who will get the richest? Israel always ranks at the top of the list. It is the Israelis who will get the most aid, the most arms, the most investment, while making the Palestinians suffer still more, the businessmen keep saying. Another big winner—Iran, playing the role of "broker" between its onetime mortal foe, Iraq, and the powers now threatening Iraq's destruction. A third possible winner—Turkey, under President Turgut Ozal, providing bases for bombing missions while getting a tidal wave of NATO arms and promises of increased military aid to bolster its antiquated military machine. Naturally, the United States also is seen as a potential winner—cornering or at least controlling, more than ever, the flow of oil from Saudi Arabia and the emirates, maybe from Kuwait and Iraq some day.

But there is a much darker side. What if Iraq gets desperately out of control? What if Saddam sends a couple of divisions into Jordan—not to threaten his "ally" of the moment, King Hussein, but to draw Israel inexorably into the conflict in a final bid to widen the war? Palestinians blanch at volunteering for "Palestinian brigades" that might come to Saddam's rescue. They know the price—a war with Israel at a time when most people here would just like the whole bloody conflagration to go away. In the end, there is the sense that their holy war—for those who still view it as "holy"—could end in humiliation and defeat. And nobody here wants to be in the losing camp with Iraq, not for all the Saddam posters in the world, not for Arafat, and certainly not for the non-Palestinian, King Hussein.

So Samir, "Uncle Sam," emerges as an irrepressible optimist. "There will be no war here," he says, thinking of the welfare of his son, the big-time money merchant, and his other son, the well-paid airplane mechanic. "Nobody wants it. Nobody even wants to demonstrate any more. You wait. Just wait a little. Maybe Saddam will leave Kuwait." But at what cost, he refuses to predict. Even in defeat, among some Palestinians here, Saddam could play the martyr's role. "Uncle Sam" is not about to take down his portraits. □

War of Nerves

JOHN BUDRIS


Jennifer Lawson

VILNIUS

ON THE NIGHT of February 12 a team of KGB agents and Red Army soldiers went to the Vilnius railroad station to make an arrest: three high-ranking Soviet military officers were charged with drug trafficking and illegal possession of weapons, handcuffed, and taken into custody at gunpoint. They were members of *Shchet* (Russian for "Shield"), an organization of reform-minded Soviet army officers. They had just presented a report to the Lithuanian parliament on the January 13 ("Bloody Sunday") assault by Soviet troops on unarmed civilians that left 16 civilians dead and five hundred injured.

They were released a day later. But what the Soviet officers confirmed—that the crackdown was directed by Moscow and that the National Salvation Committee that gave it a veneer of local support is a creature of the central authorites—is dynamite. Satellite tapes confirm that the military in Moscow and Vilnius maintained contact throughout the siege. *Shchet* also revealed that Soviet troops in Lithuania are armed with dum-dum bullets—outlawed by the Geneva Conventions as gratuitously cruel.

Some have attempted to explain

Mr. Budris was a correspondent for Radio Vilnius World Service.

away the brutality of the assault on the radio transmitter by noting that the troops were untrained in crowd control, but the same viciousness was shown in the attack by elite Black Berets on radio and television studios across town. A Radio Vilnius correspondent recalls "when the soldiers broke into the building they purposely shot at people hiding behind desks and furniture. I saw one man injured and bleeding, crawling away on his hands and knees. A soldier chased him and beat him over and over on the head with the butt of his Kalashnikov."

Why are the troops so brutal? In October, a deserter explained that officers systematically encourage hatred. They even cut rations and blame the locals: "I was a truck driver and I knew there was plenty of food. . . . [But] they told the men that it was because of the Lithuanians that they were going hungry."

Perhaps most disturbing is the role of General Valentin Varennikov, the commander-in-chief of Soviet ground forces. Varennikov was commander of ground forces in Afghanistan from 1980 to 1989, and was promoted to lead the Soviet army by Gorbachev. In 1989, he was present in Tbilisi, Georgia, when shovel-wielding troops massacred 19 civilians. Varennikov arrived in Vilnius on Bloody Sunday. A volunteer in the Lithuanian civil guard who had served in Afghanistan warned that "Wherever Varennikov comes, blood flows." He left a week later for Riga, Latvia, just in time for another murderous crackdown.

More subtle methods are now in play. Landsbergis and the independence movement are routinely vilified on propaganda broadcasts from the occupied media stations. Gorbachev has courted Algirdas Brazauskas, a potential rival to Landsbergis as the former head of the Lithuanian Communist Party who left over independence to form the Labor Party, and may hope to win over his largely rural supporters with easy promises of independence at some vague future date.

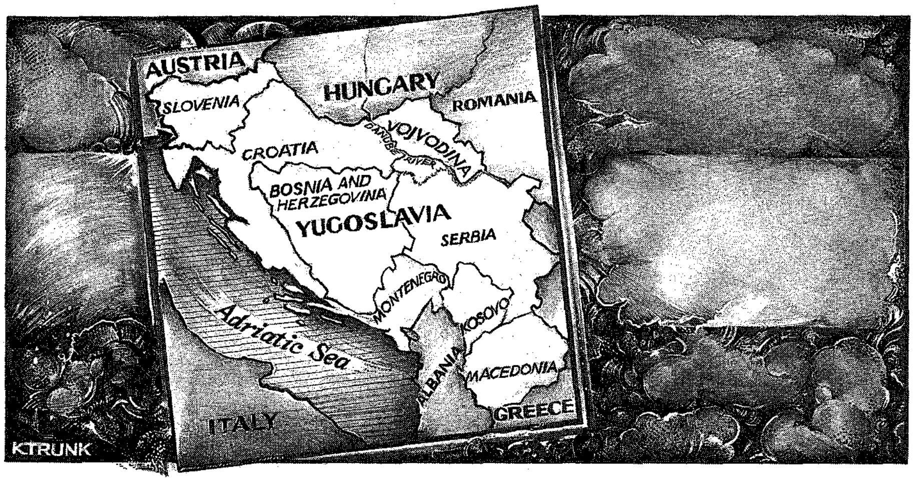
Moscow controls many unions and union enterprises (which make up over half of Lithuanian industry). Slowdown/strike orders from Moscow explain much of the 50 per cent drop in production over the last six months, according to the new prime minister, Gediminas Vagnorius. There may shortly be a strike at the Ignalia nuclear-power plant, the republic's greatest single source of electricity.

Gorbachev declared the February plebiscite illegal, even though 85 per cent of the voters turned out and 90 per cent of them voted for independence. Yet even non-Lithuanians had voted for minority status in a independent Lithuania over the protection of a centralized Soviet state. The elimination of large-denomination ruble notes has made the Soviet authorities even less popular. Gorbachev has, however, taken precautions by declaring the March 17 vote on the All-Union Treaty—which would ban secession—binding if as few as 10 per cent of the voters turn out. He might get that 10 per cent here by combining the 6 per cent that voted against independence, the ethnic Russians who boycotted it, and the forty thousand troops stationed in Lithuania.

What if Gorbachev uses a narrow victory in a poll boycotted by 85 per cent of the voters to justify Lithuania's forcible re-entry to the bloc? The concrete barriers surrounding the parliament building are now decorated with drawings and wooden crosses, while the anti-tank ditches encircling it slowly fill with snow. There are no plans to remove them. Landsbergis says simply, "They will stay." □

Irreconcilable Differences

RADEK SIKORSKI



Katherine Trunk

ZAGREB

IN THE capital of the Croatian republic—for the moment, part of what is still called "Yugoslavia"—young men in leather jackets have set up shop at the foot of an equestrian statue. Beneath the bronze sword of the nineteenth-century hero, car stickers, badges, and flags of a renewed country lie spread out upon faded blankets. Inane music, with patriotic incantations, blares from ghetto blasters. Like everywhere else in Eastern Europe since 1989, such vendors are a sure sign that a revolution is imminent. A revolution is over when the vendors have moved into the ordinary kiosks and souvenir shops and their wares have become regular tourist trash just like everywhere else.

On the wooded hills near the old governor's palace, a fine example of late Austro-Hungarian baroque, soldiers in camouflage fatigues guard a villa. Their epaulettes proclaim "Police" but they are the most martial-looking policemen I've ever seen. Their caps bear the emblem of the Republic of Croatia. As part of Yugoslavia, Croatia is not constitutionally entitled to its own army, so the Croats have armed their police to the teeth. Half carry Soviet-made kalashnikovs and half American M-16s. Our car swerves round an armored personnel carrier and a heavy iron gate closes behind.

The villa's sole resident is retired General Martin Spegelj, a stocky man in his sixties, dressed in a badly cut suit and polyester tie. Given his position, the general is remarkably cheerful. "You are a very young man to be a reporter for the NATIONAL REVIEW," he remarks before we launch into a discussion of Croatia's strategic predicament. "And how ees Meester Buklee

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Mr. Sikorski is NR's *roving correspondent.*

zeeze dayz?" asks a lieutenant. "Steel presenteeng ze *Firink Line*?"

General Spegelj is a wanted man. A Yugoslav military tribunal has just issued a warrant for his arrest on charges of treason. He is also Croatia's defense minister. A film has been shown on Yugoslav television purporting to show the general scheming to round up and kill Serbs in Croatia. "They have tampered with the soundtrack," says the general. "When I said, 'We shall fight the Serbs if attacked' they took out the 'if attacked.'" He smiles a slightly reptilian smile. "I do not mean to imply that we would not be prepared to fight them at all."

No matter what he says, the Spegelj affair was for many the final straw. Last autumn, the CIA predicted the breakup of the Yugoslav federation "within 18 months," and tension on the ground confirms that time is running out. The rumbling fault line lies between the republic of Serbia and the two Western-looking republics of Croatia and Slovenia. The latter has issued an ultimatum, calling for a new form of confederation—or else. Men bearing kalashnikovs look out of place among old Zagreb's fine baroque churches, sleepy cobbled streets, and statues to obscure heroes. Yet they clearly mean business. If Yugoslav writ is to prevail, General Spegelj will have to be kidnapped. His continued freedom is the symbol of Croat defiance of the "Serb-dominated" Yugoslav army. If the earthquake comes, tremors will center on Zagreb, with the general's villa as the very epicenter.

With its dozen-odd languages, myriad republics, hopelessly tangled politics, and thoroughly obscure history, Yugoslavia's problems might seem too difficult to bother with. But put it this way: Yugoslavia is a miniature Soviet Union without the missiles. What happens here may well happen further East, as the same combination of post-Communist economics and nationalism prevails in both countries.

Southern Slavs and Balkan tribes were thrown together into one country after World War I because no satisfactory lines of division into nation-states could be found. Serbs—Orthodox in religion, demographically dominant, politically both defensive and imperialist—are Yugoslavia's Russians. Slovenia and Croatia enjoyed centuries of enlightened Habsburg rule while Serbia groaned under the Ottoman yoke. Cheerful Slovenes and dashing Croats mix as uneasily with gloomy Serbs as urbane Estonians with dour Russians. The Kosovo regions, with an Albanian majority as poor as Soviet Muslims, was bloodily suppressed by Serbia.

Yugoslavia has arguably done well out of Communism. Its citizens were permitted to travel abroad decades before such privileges were granted to Hungarians or Czechs. Its shops have always been relatively full and its foreign policy comparatively independent. But unlike the rest of Eastern Europe, Yugoslavia never had Soviet tanks on its territory. While Poles and Czechs derive strength from the fact that rebuilding their country from Communism is rebuilding it from ravages imposed—ultimately—by foreigners, Yugoslavs know that the pain has been self-inflicted.

BUT AN ideological gulf rips right across the country, along an ancient divide which formerly separated the Byzantine world from the Roman, Christian from Moslem, Catholic from Orthodox, Habsburg from Ottoman. Posturing as the defenders of Serbia's national interests, Mr. Slobodan Milosevic's neo-Communists actually won recent democratic elections in Serbia. Serbia has thereby placed itself with Rumania and Bulgaria among those East European countries where Communism has put down deep roots. In the two Western republics of Slovenia and Croatia, pro-capitalist nationalists won.

Thus the seventy-year-old experiment with Yugoslavia has run its full course. Little goodwill remains to patch up the grievances, the differences of temperament, and the ancient hatreds between its nations. In a different age, perhaps a Serb monarch might have married a Croatian countess, given his children Montenegrin, Bosnian, Macedonian, and Albanian names, and the union might have stuck. Today, there seems little hope.

The pains of separation will be great, especially for frontline Croatia. Establishing a diplomatic service will cost hundreds of millions of dollars. Foreign investments and commercial links with other republics will be lost. Some Croats in Serbia and some Serbs in Croatia will resettle rather than live in a foreign country. Even if everything somehow runs smoothly, who knows when Croatia will have the two necessary attributes of sovereignty: control over its territory and its own currency?

As with the Soviet Union, the knee-jerk Western reaction to Yugoslavia's impending breakup is to prop up the central government. The key word is "stability." In diplomatspeak, "stability" means the preservation of the status quo, whatever the wishes of the peoples involved. In the name of stability, nothing was done to help the Hungarians in 1956, the Czechs in 1968, or the Poles in 1981. However ossified the regime in question, someone, somewhere, be it the State Department, the Foreign Office, the *New York Times*, or the *Guardian*, will argue for its preservation.

Yugoslavia resembles the USSR but it does not, after all, have the missiles. No Great Powers vie for influence here, unlike in 1914. No world war is likely to be fought over it. If the constituent parts no longer see any interest in preserving it, it should be allowed to disintegrate, God willing, peacefully.

If the West has to choose, we should not hesitate. A Yugoslavia held together by the Serb-dominated Yugoslav army would be militaristic, centralized, and neo-Communist. Croats and Slovenes could not be blamed for wishing to live outside such a country. Left to themselves, they have a better chance to establish democracy, capitalism, and prosperity. And real stability comes only when peoples feel that their interests are secure.

AS A final digression, the fate of Yugoslavia should serve as a warning to the more ardent supporters of European integration. When the Croats and the Slovenes complain about the iniquity of the federal arrangement, they have something very specific in mind. A modern supra-national bureaucracy—be it Serbian, neo-Communist, or Euro-yuppie—has the same tendency to grasp power and waste resources. To a detached eye, there is little difference between Brussels giving money to German and French peasants, and Belgrade appropriating resources of Slovenia and Croatia to curry favor with the peasants of Vojvodina. When the going was good, it didn't matter. When the going got bad, the losers got going. Unless Europe learns from the Yugoslav experience, it will repeat it. ☐

A QUIET THREAT TO ACADEMIC FREEDOM

HAVE A NICE DAY

Academics are dedicated to pursuing truth.
But not all truths are politically correct.
And when the academy's politics are threatened,
the researcher takes a vacation. Why?

JAMES S. COLEMAN

THREE YEARS AGO, receiving an award from the American Sociological Association, I reminded those present that the person to whom they were making the award had earlier been harassed, vilified, and attacked by Association officers as well as by other social scientists for precisely the same research that was the cause of the award then given.

Among the threats to academic freedom, the threat posed by fellow faculty members is probably greater than that posed by the usual villains—the administrators of universities. The greatest enemy of academic freedom is the norms that exist about what kinds of questions may be raised in research (and in teaching as well), and what kinds of questions may not be raised. There are taboos on certain topics, taboos which if broken lead to sanctions not primarily from administrators nor from the general public, but from one's own colleagues.

The taboos that a sociologist is most likely to encounter are those concerning questions of differences between genders or differences among races which might be genetic in origin. Any research on the social factors leading to homosexuality that begins with the premise that homosexuality is less natural than heterosexuality would be under similar taboo. And there are other topics with taboos less strong.

What interests and concerns me here is what the defining characteristic is of these taboos, and how they are held in place. The gentleman's agreement that certain questions remain unexamined constitutes one major threat to academic freedom in universities and colleges. What is more, it is a threat that operates not merely through the suppression by colleagues of research on inappropriate questions, but also through suppression by oneself.

Unexpected Results

LET ME begin by recounting an incident. Under a provision of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the U.S. Office of Education (as it was then called) was carrying out a survey concerning the lack of equality of educational opportunity among races, and I was directing the study. The research arrived at some unexpected results, of which three were most important:

1. That the facilities and resources of schools attended by black and white children in the *same* region and urban–rural setting differed very little. The principal differences in resources and facilities were between regions and between rural–urban settings, not among races within these settings. This did lead to inequalities of resources and facilities by race, but only through their different distributions across the country.

2. We found that even if the resource distribution had been different, it would not have mattered very much. Differential effectiveness of different schools was not very much related to the resources put into the schools by schoolboards—not to per-pupil expenditure, age of textbooks, nor a host of other measures.

To understand how the outputs of education could be unrelated to the school inputs, it is only necessary to shift the context. In the industries of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, which like American public schools operate under state management without mar-

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Mr. Coleman is a professor of sociology at the University of Chicago. This article was adapted from his speech upon receiving the 1990 Sidney Hook Award from the National Association of Scholars, which has printed the full speech in its journal, Academic Questions.

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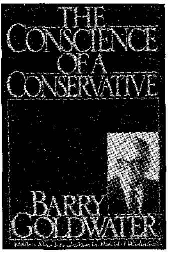

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kets subject to the discipline of consumer choice, outputs are also little related to inputs.

There was one school resource that we did find more highly related to student achievement than others. Teachers were given a short vocabulary test in the survey; we found that the teachers' scores on vocabulary tests were related to the verbal achievements of students in the school. Other characteristics of teachers were not: not degrees, not experience, not salary; but the vocabulary test score *was* related.

3. Black children achieved far better in schools with student bodies that were predominantly middle class. Although the official school resources mattered little for their achievement, the resources provided by fellow students did make a difference—not as much as their own family backgrounds, but more than the schoolboard's resources.

These results had various consequences: the first two were strongly opposed within the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, for they went against conventional wisdom and against recently initiated federal policy of funding school physical facilities in the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The third result was widely used by plaintiffs in school desegregation cases including the city-wide busing cases that were initiated over the next several years.

But there was one result that attracted little attention: the relation of teachers' vocabulary scores to student achievement. One policy issue that was current —a necessary accompaniment of school desegregation —was the future of black teachers as the formerly segregated school systems of the South were dismantled. These teachers were at a disadvantage because of the strong prejudice that many Southern whites held at having their children taught by black teachers. But they were also at another disadvantage: themselves products of segregated school systems, they were on the whole less well prepared, less qualified, with

SENSE AND SENSITIVITY

AT Kenyon College the course catalogue recommends Biology 14 as one of two departmental courses designed to "provide a broad overview for students with minimal background in biology." As its title, "Biology of Female Sexuality," makes clear, however, the course is not an introductory survey of biological science. Described as "multidisciplinary" and "feminist," the course promises to examine "sexual and reproductive biologies" as understood through modern biotechnology, but also in terms of "ethics, government [*sic*], and religious institutions, social status, and women's realities." The description concludes:

> Particular attention will be paid to critiques and analyses by marginalized women such as those of native American, Hispanic-American, lesbian, African-American, Jewish-American, and non-Western women. No prerequisites.

To "forge a feminist understanding of women's health concerns," four books are assigned, notably *Witches Heal.* In its introduction, addressed to "Wimmin," Billie Potts declares:

> As lesbians, we . . . must question male medical authority, dare to hear and follow the witches, uncover old wyves tales, and heal ourselves.

On the first day of class, Professor KathRyn ("Ryn" to her friends) L. Edwards, PhD, a plant physiologist, distributed a flier urging female students to make "verbal contributions to discussion," but instructing male students that "participation means seriously listening more than contributing to the discussion." When one student asked why men were being thus effectively silenced, the *Kenyon Observer* reported, Professor Edwards replied that "men never know when to shut up."

There is little opposition to Biology 14. Such dissenters as there are remain mostly silent for fear of being labled "insensitive" to lesbians—or, in another piece of the current cant, infected with *homophobia.*

This path of intellectual change follows the course of the civil-rights movement. Originally, racism was embodied in social custom and practice, and the civil-rights movement's early goal was to oppose discrimination. But when the barriers to minority rights fell, racism as a fact of personality remained. A new impetus now arose against bigotry itself. No longer content to attack just concrete discrimination, activists targeted subjective states of mind as well.

In the academy, prohibitions are increasingly placed upon the professor's or student's right to use "hurtful speech" or even to think improper thoughts. This attempt to impose "sensitivity" is significantly associated with Luddite scholarship. In *Signs of the Times: Deconstruction and the Fall of Paul de Man* [reviewed in this issue by Jeffrey Hart, page 52], David Lehman writes:

> The trendy coinage is *phallogocentrism*, a merger of logocentrism and phallocentrism. The right-minded critic sets out to undo "patriarchal" assumptions. In particular, you want—as one enthusiast puts it—to deconstruct "singularity, embodied in the phallus, asserted in Logos, inscribed in an egotistical I."

History, on this reading, turns out to be a saga of the failed dominance of white heterosexual men—failed because it has suppressed humanity's most civilizing influences. Thus the proliferation of new "studies" (principally black, feminist, and gay) and theories (especially deconstructionism) has stimulated what Lehman has called "the search for a unified field theory of oppression."

Whether or not practitioners of "oppression studies" have actually achieved theoretical unity, they do share a single purpose, which Peter

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Mr. Sykes is author of ProfScam: Professors and the Demise of Higher Education *and* The Hollow Men: Politics and Corruption in Higher Education. *Mr. Miner is* NR*'s literary editor. Together they edited* The National Review College Guide: America's Top 50 Liberal Arts Schools *(Wolgemuth & Hyatt). Copies of* The College Guide *are available for $14.95 (plus $2 shipping and handling). Write to* NATIONAL REVIEW *or call 800-645-9800.*

lower verbal skills, than their white counterparts. What does this mean for the research? The question we did *not* ask was the question that followed from our research result, that children's verbal achievement in school was related to the vocabulary test scores of teachers in the school, taken together with the fact that black teachers were generally less well prepared than were white teachers. These two facts together lead directly to a question directly relevant to the fate of black teachers from formerly segregated school systems: How is the achievement of black children related to the racial composition of the teaching staff?

These facts would lead to the conjecture that they would do less well on average under black teachers than under white teachers. But the role-modeling or cultural-difference hypothesis implicit in much current theorizing would lead to the opposite conjecture, that they would be doing better, on average, under black teachers. If the first conjecture were right, it would have some disturbing implications. One would be that a major source of inequality of educational opportunity for black students was the fact that they were being taught by black teachers. Another, directly relevant to the policy issue, would be that both black and white children would have greater educational opportunity if they were not taught by these teachers. This potential implication was the cause of our not asking the question that followed naturally from our research.

We had many other battles to fight with agency officials who did not like the results we had achieved, many problems in merely maintaining the integrity of the research report in the face of attempts to rewrite it. Yet a dispassionate researcher, concerned in finding facts relevant to the issues at hand (one of which was school staff desegregation), would have gone on to ask the question we did not ask. One could well argue that by not asking it, we aided in the sacrifice of educational opportunity for many children, most them black, to pro-

Shaw has termed "intellectual disequilibrium." It is, in effect, a substitute for radical political action in that it attempts to alter reality by changing its description.

Prohibitions on free speech (in the name of protecting the "oppressed" and promoting sensitivity) are imposed de jure and de facto; first by rules, frequently referred to as "anti-harassment" codes, and then by fear, usually as willing (sometimes unwilling) conformity with "politically correct" thinking.

When University of Pennsylvania legal-studies professor Murray Dolfman found that none of his students could tell him where the word "servitude" appears in the Constitution, he quipped that the "ex-slaves" in the class should be able to guess. It worked; the students identified the Thirteenth Amendment. But Professors Dolfman was subsequently accused of racial insensitivity, and in-class protests made it impossible for him to continue teaching. Penn President Seldon Hackney called the professor's conduct "absolutely intolerable," and pressured Professor Dolfman to make what the latter has called a "forced apology," and to attend racial-awareness seminars.

When University of Washington business major Pete Schaub decided to take "Introduction to Women's Studies," he was genuinely interested in learning about "the history of women and the contributions they have made." He sat quietly while one lecturer called the nuclear family "dysfunctional." He even endured a guest speaker's declamation on the virtues of masturbation. But when it was asserted that lesbians actually make the best parents, he asked, after class, his feminist professor for some proof. "Why are you challenging me?" she asked indignantly. At the next session Mr. Schaub found himself barred by campus police from entering the classroom.

Such incidents are not uncommon. Across the country, teachers and students are directed to avoid giving offense to any individual or group officially designated as oppressed. What's more, teachers and students are asked to accept a new kind of scholarship, a *scholarship of advocacy* designed to both enhance the self-esteem of the oppressed and to upset the oppressor's monopoly on power.

The intellectual price is high. When KathRyn Edwards at Kenyon or Leonard Jeffries at New York's City College (who teaches that blacks are "sun people"—warm, communal, and intuitive, and that whites are "ice people"—cold, individualistic, and brutal) bring fanciful notions into the classroom, they evoke enthusiasm among like-minded students, because sexism and racism are concepts readily perceived and easily manipulated in today's campus climate. But what politically correct academics do *not* do is what scholars always have done: attempt to subject their theories to the test of falsification. It is reassuringly easy to confirm *any* theory when all that is sought is confirmation. Men are cads; all whites are bigots. Who can disprove such assertions when evidence to the contrary is excluded from discussion and when, indeed, "denial" is evidence of bigotry?

SCIENCE, in the sense of empirical testing of hypotheses, is as important in history and literature courses as it is in a nuclear lab or an operating room. Techniques of analysis may fail us, but the scientific method does not. The traditional understanding of academic freedom holds that inquiry proceeds unobstructed from ignorance to truth, and that truth is objective, knowable. Strange then that Kenyon College, not uniquely we must add, brings witchcraft into a discussion of biology, and then discourages its students from discussing it critically. But when truth is put in the service of the narrow ideologies of gender, race, and sexual preference, "sensitivity" becomes another word for lying and "diversity" an excuse for suppressing real intellectual differences.

—Charles J. Sykes & Brad Miner

tect the careers of black teachers. And one could argue further that by not asking it, we encouraged the continued neglect of a question that if examined would have forced a serious examination of the academic skills of black teachers—and not only of black teachers, but of *all* teachers—leading to the kind of skill-specific retraining of teachers that would bring improvements in educational outcomes for children.

But my principal concern here is not this policy issue. It is, rather, the impulse not to ask the crucial question—an impulse that prevents many relevant research questions from being raised.

We hesitate to ask research questions that might lead to results that would elicit disapproval of those colleagues we see regularly. When there is a strong consensus among these colleagues, we redirect our behav-

BIG BROTHER IN DELAWARE

IT IS NOT true that the University of Delaware has annulled the principle of academic freedom. At least the University says it hasn't. All that it has done is to redefine academic freedom to include affirmative action. That is like redefining apples to include oranges. But never mind—once you are on the Orwellian newspeak rollercoaster, you may as well enjoy the ride. The University discriminates against research that it deems dangerous to affirmative-action dogma, but instead of violating academic freedom, that is supposed to be in defense of it. Here's how:

> The University has a right to set its own priorities for support of scholarly activity. The University's commitment to racial and cultural diversity is an essential part of, not a rival principle in conflict with, the University's commitment to [academic freedom].

Those sentences occur in a committee report recommending that the University not accept grants from the Pioneer Fund, a small foundation that, in the words of its charter, supports "research into problems of heredity and eugenics." The report was accepted without reservation by UD's president and endorsed by its board of trustees. In consequence, the highly regarded work of Linda Gottfredson, the only UD professor to receive Pioneer Fund grants, is in jeopardy. And quite rightly too: for her studies examine the social consequences of individual and group differences in ability.

Of course UD has not told Professor Gottfredson what she may think or what line of inquiry she may pursue. That would be censorship. But most faculty research is supported by external grants; UD has simply denied Professor Gottfredson hers. The reason given is that Pioneer Fund money is tainted:

> [a] preponderant portion of the activities supported by the Fund either seek to demonstrate or start from the assumption that there are fundamental hereditary differences among people of different racial and cultural backgrounds . . .

That, by the way, is not true of Gottfredson's own research.

The language is chosen to imply bias. But all research seeks to prove something, and all is based on assumptions that, as the inquiry proceeds, are either borne out or not. If there is a bias, let it be shown by additional evidence or closer reasoning. The attempt to dispose of a factual claim on non-factual grounds confesses fear that the claim may be true. Besides, the implicit appeal to morality is spurious.

As it happens, UD's description of the Pioneer Fund is false. Only about 20 per cent of the work it supports pertains to racial differences, and not all of that concerns their heritability. Nor do all those whose work the Fund supports agree that race is a useful category. In a letter, the chairman of UD's board of trustees all but admits the falsity of the charge.

> No matter whether that is in fact the orientation of Pioneer Fund or not, that is perceived as the orientation of the Fund by at least a material number of our faculty, staff, and students. Without judging the merits of this perception, the board's objective of increasing minority presence at the University could . . . be hampered if the University chose to seek funds from the Pioneer Fund at this time.

At least UD is consistent. It does not care what is true about racial differences and it does not care what is true about the Pioneer Fund. What matters is that some people *say* that research in this area is racist.

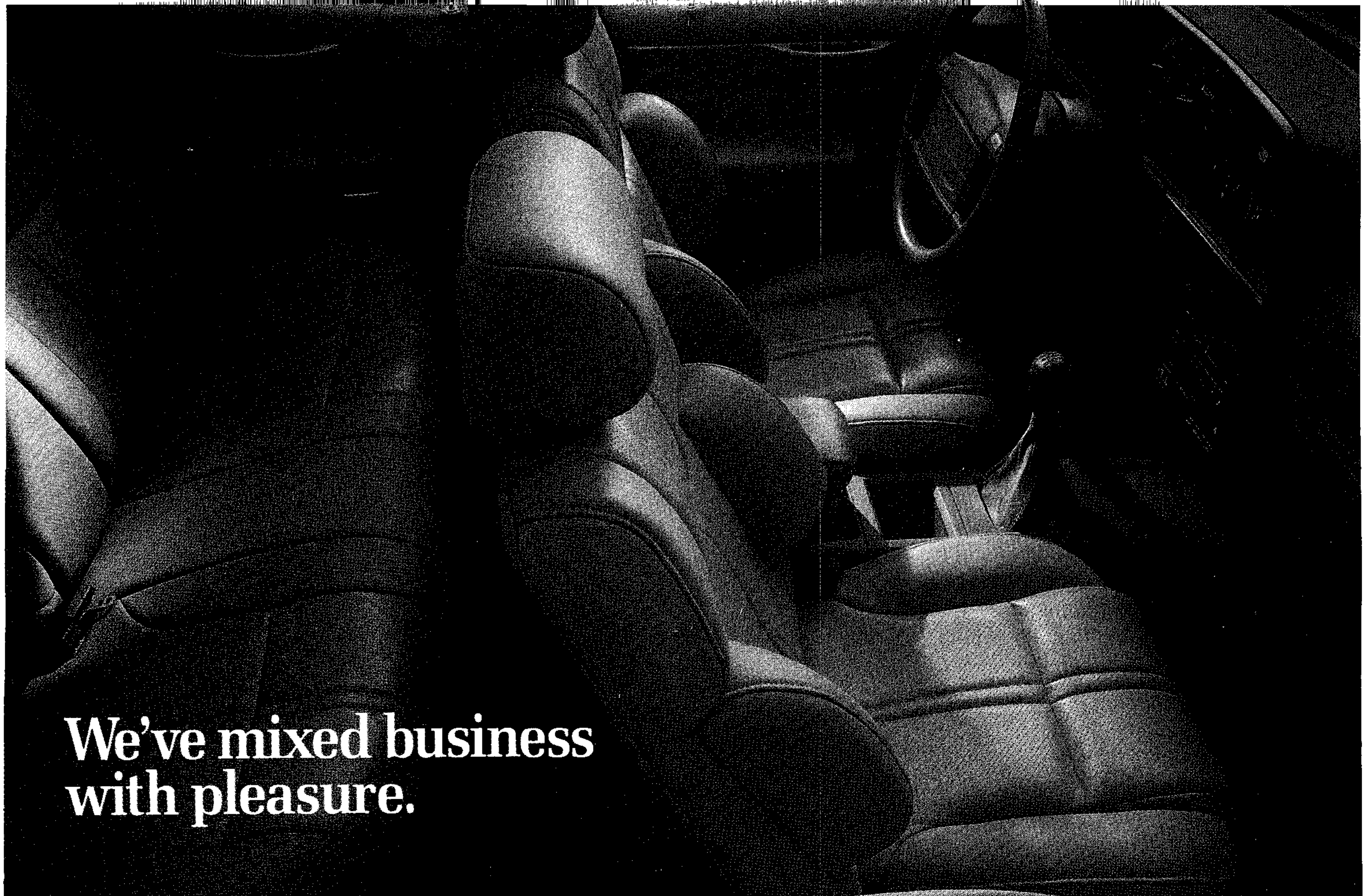
There is a long history of attempts by the academic Left to police the thought of their colleagues. Charging them with racism is the easiest and most successful whip to use. The eminent Harvard entomologist, and father of sociobiology, E. O. Wilson, has felt the sting of that lash, as have the Berkeley psychologist, Arthur Jensen, and numerous others. You build power by exercising power. Every time the Left succeeds in shutting up a speaker, or shutting down his research, it wins more adherents. And each time the Left is conceded such a victory, the academy is further implicated in the notion that "political correctness" supersedes truth. It then becomes increasingly difficult to resist the next step.

University of Deleware has handed ideologues a new weapon: though intended to evade charges of censorship, its action widens censorship's scope. Scientists and scholars will be made vulnerable to political objections not only to their own work but to other work which the same funding source supports. And therefore foundations will become even more reluctant to fund politically sensitive research, lest their support of others be jeopardized.

Don't think all this goes unappreciated elsewhere. A prestigious Northeastern college is "reconsidering" whether to withhold Pioneer Funds from one of its professors, and other universities are waiting to see whether the Delaware decision will survive legal challenge. Big Brother may be coming to your college soon.

—THOMAS SHORT

Mr. Short is a professor of philosophy at Kenyon College.



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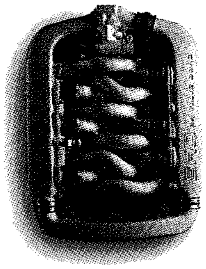

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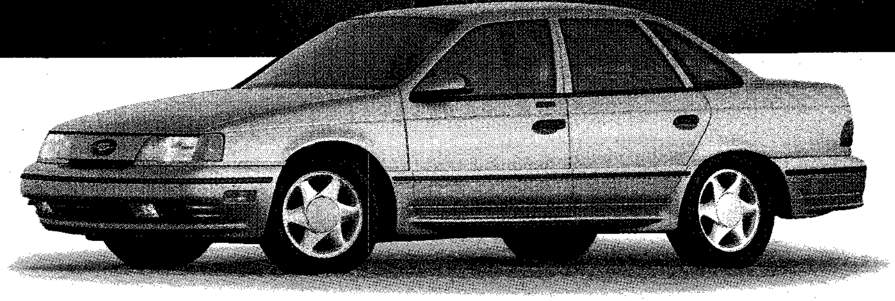

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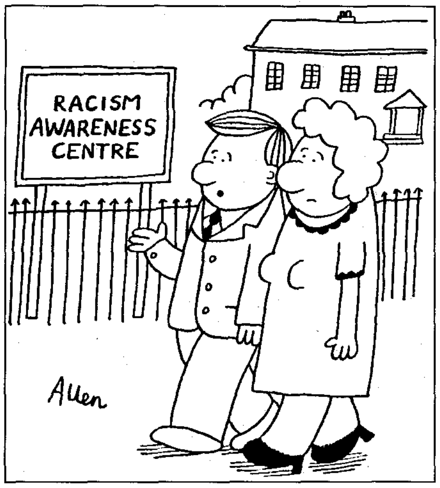
ior accordingly. The stakes are not trivial. I think of a sociologist who, in the fervor of 1960s school-desegregation policy strongly favored by his fellow sociologists, asked the wrong questions and came out with answers inimical to these favored policies—subsequently failing to get tenure. I know also from personal experience on several occasions the strength of such attacks.

What are the kinds of results that most strongly elicit disapproval from one's colleagues? The answer is not always and everywhere the same, but for many academics in many settings it can be put this way: There are certain policies, certain public activities, that have the property that they stem from benevolent intentions toward others less fortunate or in some way oppressed—policies intended to aid the poor, or to aid blacks or Hispanics or women. Any research that would hinder these policies is subject to such disapproval and attack. These are policies intended to display, ostentatiously even, egalitarian objectives. For many academics they replace the patterns of conspicuous consumption that Thorstein Veblen attributed to the rich. They might be called policies of conspicuous benevolence. They display, conspicuously, the benevolent intentions of their supporters.

The consensus about such policies among academics stems from a general view that there is a single broad conflict in public policy and political affairs, between those with good intentions who want to help the disadvantaged and those who are selfish and opposed to any such aid. This view manifests itself in a thousand ways. It was the source of the widespread support of Communism among intellectuals in the 1920s and 1930s; it is the source of widespread support for sanctions against South Africa; for civil-rights measures; for school-busing policies; for generous welfare provisions; for bills to aid the handicapped; for the Equal Rights Amendment. Sometimes support is well-placed. Sometimes it is not.



"They used to call them schools."

Allen, *Punch* / Rothco

The conflict between this conspicuous benevolence and dispassionate research on the consequences of social policy lies in the difference between intentions and consequences. A former teacher of mine, Robert K. Merton, has pointed out that because the indirect consequences of social action may be very different from its intended consequences, much of sociology consists of examining the unintended consequences of purposive action. The policies of conspicuous benevolence are not, unfortunately, immune to the principle that intentions do not equal consequences, and may in fact harm just those they are intended to help. But so long as there is a consensus among academics on the policies of conspicuous benevolence, self-suppression will prevent their serious questioning.

How may that consensus be opposed or undone? The problem is a fundamental one, because a university is a community, and a department is a community within that community. It is within such communities that norms grow and thrive. A norm about what is the "right" thing to teach and what is the "right" research to carry out constitutes an assumption by members of the community of the right to disapprove of or otherwise sanction a member on the basis of his research or teaching. Members of that community feel an obligation—one that sometimes leads to the self-suppression I have described earlier—to accede to the right held by that community. In a different context, Sidney Hook wrote about this, recognizing the close connection between community and rights accompanied by obligation. In the first of his lectures published as *The Paradoxes of Freedom* (1962), he says:

> Obligation is derived from the reflective judgment that some shared goal, purpose, need—some shared interest, want, or feeling—requires the functioning presence of these rights. Without some common nature or some community of feeling, the sense of obligation could hardly develop: the assertion of rights would have no binding or driving emotional force.

As Sidney Hook wrote, community generates rights; rights generate obligation—and it is this obligation which leads, in the case under question, to self-suppression of academic freedom.

There are, of course, other methods by which these inconvenient questions may be raised. The most prominent is the creation of a subcommunity that does not share the consensus on egalitarian goals held by the larger community. Another is to create such a community outside the university's academic community. In this alternative lies the importance of the institutions half inside, half outside academia: the Hoover Institution, the American Enterprise Institute, and others—for extending the range of questions examined, and questioning the consequences of the policies of conspicuous benevolence. In this connection also, the insulation provided by colleagues in an association like the National Association of Scholars is important.

But there is a way out that avoids either such retreat into smaller communities of like-minded heretics. There are hierarchies of shared values in a community, and therefore hierarchies of rights. *If*, in the hierarchy of values held by the academic community of which one is a part, the value of freedom of inquiry is higher than the value of equality (the value that gives rise to conspicuous benevolence), then such constraints, such self-suppression of research into inconvenient questions, will no longer be effective. It is this, I submit, which is lacking in many university settings. Were it present, the community and the sense of obligation of which Sidney Hook wrote would lead to pursuit of inconvenient questions without constraint. And that, after all, is what the university is supposed to be about. ☐

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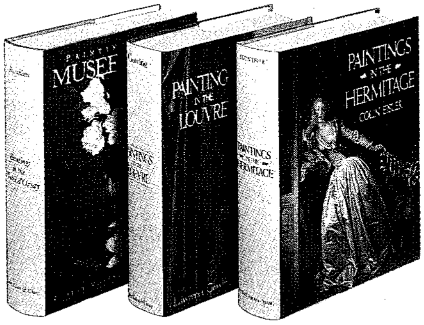

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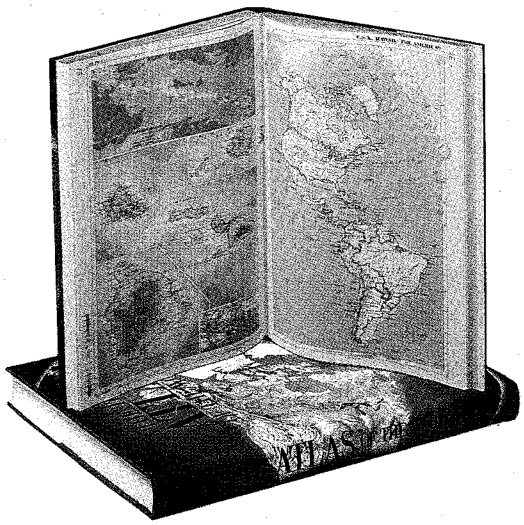

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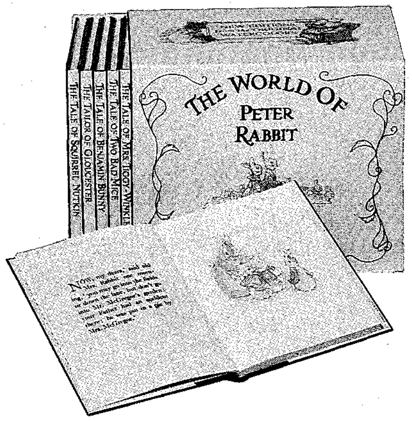

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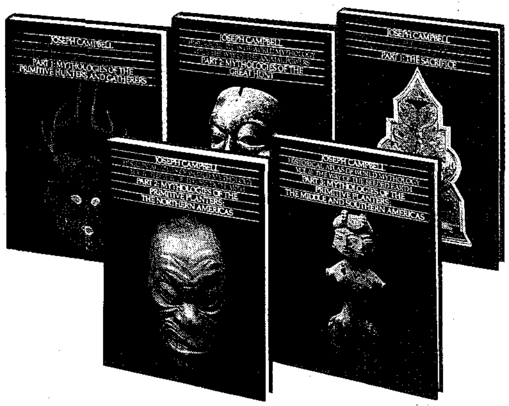

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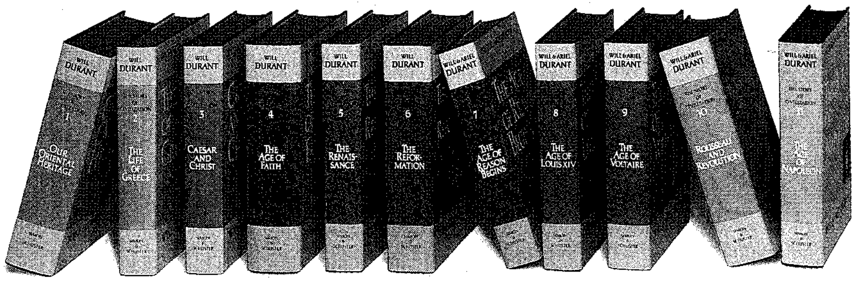

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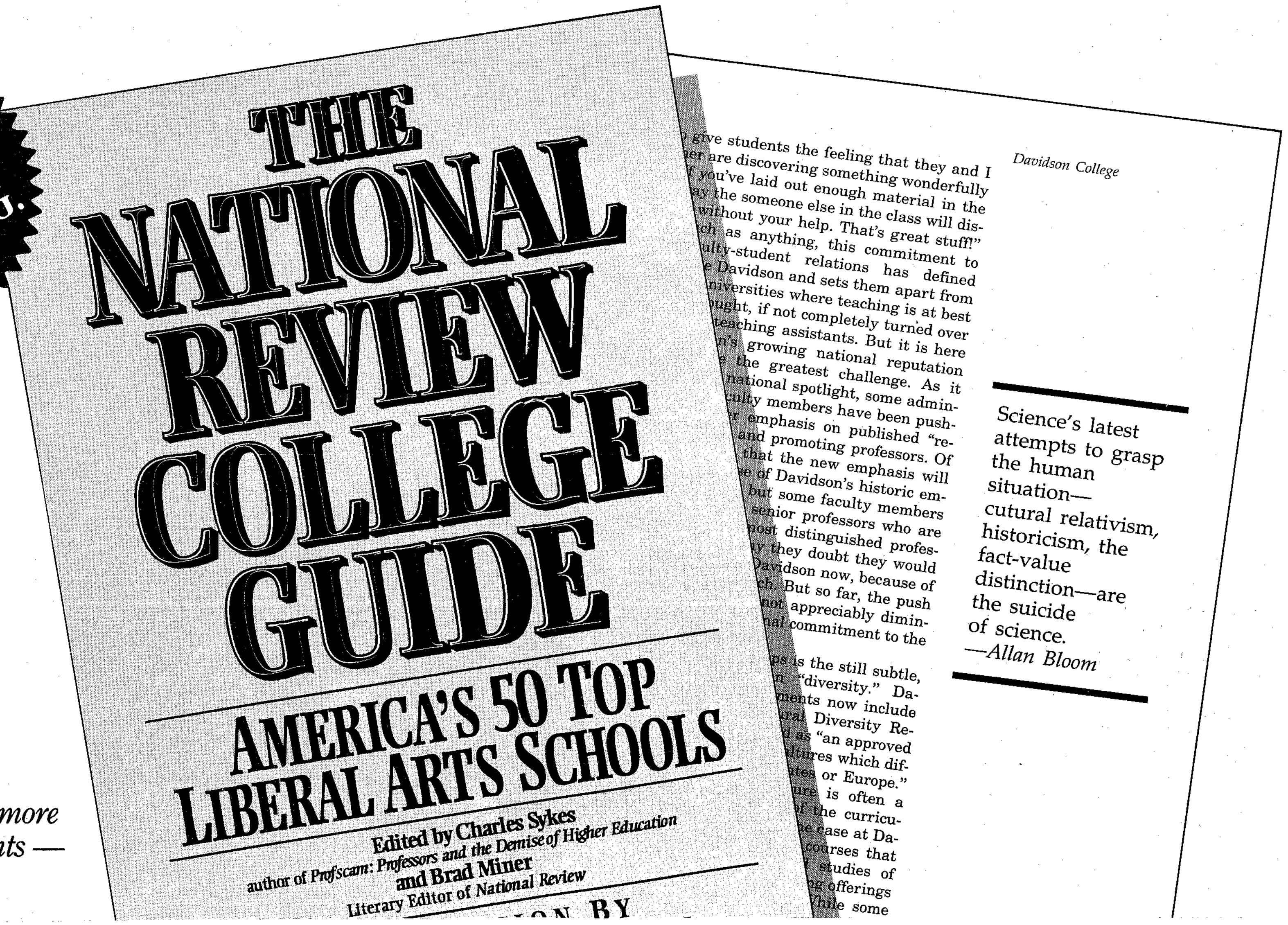

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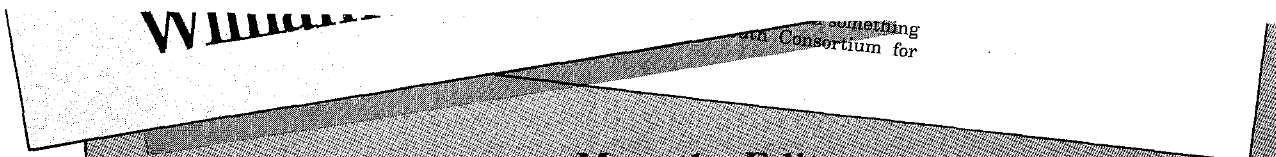

Meet the Editors.

CHARLES SYKES, prize-winning journalist, is author of the explosive best-seller, *Profscam,* a devastating portrayal of the persistent corruption in higher education. His several years of research for that book furnished much of the material for this.

BRAD MINER is Literary Editor of National Review. A native of Columbus, Ohio, Mr. Miner had a distinguished editorial career in the book publishing industry before joining NR in 1989. Like Mr. Sykes, he is the son of a college professor.

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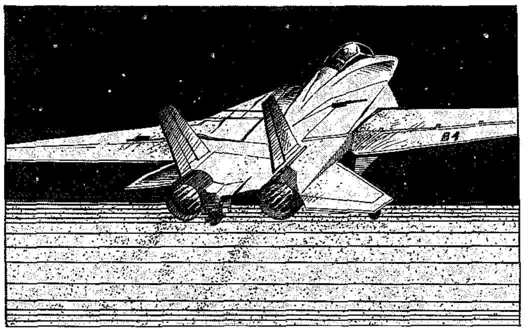
Gulf Crisis

THE WAY OF THE WAR



Now that the long-awaited allied ground attack has begun, we can evaluate how accurate our estimates have been so far, and look ahead to (dare one think it?) Mideast peace.

TREVOR N. DUPUY

On February 24, midway through the sixth week of Operation Desert Storm, allied forces initiated a major ground offensive against the Iraqi occupiers of Kuwait. This was the third phase of the operation, otherwise known as the Kuwait War, or the Gulf War. With the opening of this new phase, it is time to assess the progress of the war, and to forecast its future course.

Shortly before the war I made an estimate that hostilities were likely to last about 40 to 56 days, in four phases, as follows:

Phase 1: An air campaign of about ten days to two weeks, costing about 380 American casualties, of whom about 190 would be killed.

Phase 2: A continuation of the air campaign, with limited ground probes against Iraqi positions, lasting ten days to two weeks, costing about 1,940 casualties, of whom about 320 would be killed.

Phase 3: A ground offensive, featuring an encirclement of Iraqi forces in Kuwait by means of a "triple envelopment," continuing another ten days to two weeks, with 6,470 casualties, of whom about 1,080 would be killed.

Phase 4: If these operations did not bring about an Iraqi surrender, another ten days to two weeks would probably be required to advance to, and occupy, Baghdad, an operation in which we might suffer about 1,000 more casualties, of whom about 160 would be killed.

My overall estimate of U.S. casualties for this period of 40 to 56 days was a total of about 8,800 if an opposed advance to Baghdad is not necessary, or about 9,800 if we do have to fight our way into Baghdad, of whom about 1,600 to 1,750 would be killed. I did not pretend that my estimates were precise predictions; I merely calculated what was *likely* to happen, by assessing the effects of modern weapons technology on historical trends and patterns.

The course of the war to date has not greatly affected those forecasts. The air campaign, Phase 1, lasted nearly two weeks longer than I had projected. While it was going on the Iraqis surprised us (but not seriously) with some costly probes, at Khafji and south of Wafrah. These apparently had two purposes. The first was propaganda (they knew from CNN that Khafji was unoccupied). A secondary purpose was undoubtedly reconnaissance, since their intelligence capability is almost certainly limited to what they can learn from CNN and other Western media. After that it was the allies who did the probing, as they began Phase 2, overlapping Phase 1 to a considerable extent.

There are at least two reasons why the air campaign lasted longer than I had expected. There was a week of bad weather, and for a week or more at least one-third of the available attack air resources were sent on a Scud hunt. One other reason is that mine was an essentially uninformed estimate, without detailed knowledge of the situation on the ground, or General Schwarzkopf's capability to apply intelligence resources to assess the results of the air attacks. Phase 2 also lasted about a week longer than I had expected, at least partly because of the somewhat reluctant agreement of the coalition's political leaders to allow time for Soviet President Gorbachev's abortive peace initiative, before President Bush's February 22 ultimatum.

Rough Estimates

We went through Phases 1 and 2 with fewer than 100 U.S. casualties, instead of the 2,200 I had originally estimated. And early reports on the progress of Phase 3 suggest that the total American casualties for the war are not likely to exceed 7,500, and that the total killed will be fewer than 1,300. The war could be over between March 15 and March 25. Should that happen, it will be seen that my pre-war forecasts somewhat overestimated our casualties, and very slightly underestimated the total length of the war.

On the same basis, it is possible to estimate that the total of non-U.S. allied casualties over the same period would be about 4,500, of whom 900 would be killed. It is not possible to estimate Iraqi casualties as closely, but over a similar period they would total about 100,000, with 20,000 dead.

My underestimation of American

Mr. Dupuy is a retired colonel of the U.S. Army and the author, most recently, of How to Defeat Saddam Hussein: Scenarios and Strategies for the Gulf War.

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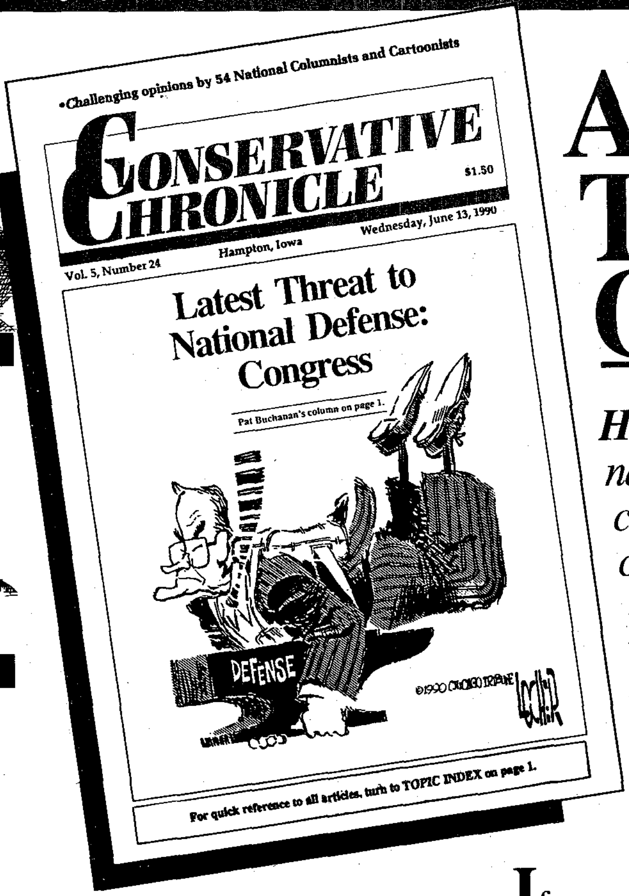
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PATRICK BUCHANAN

GOP forfeited its opportunity

TOPIC INDEX

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City ______________________ State ____ Zip ________ casualties for the first two phases seems to be due to two things. Allied air forces seem to be performing with greater skill than anticipated, and the Iraqi air and air-defense forces to be even less effective than expected.

There is, however, one other consideration that could affect both the timetable and the casualty estimates given above. This is the losses from air attack suffered by the Iraqi army in and around Kuwait during the first two phases. On February 15 the UN command in Riyadh estimated that allied air forces had destroyed one-third of the Iraqi tanks and artillery pieces. While the circumstances are somewhat different, it is possible to estimate Iraqi personnel casualties from the standard relationship of tank-loss and personnel-loss rates in a defensive ground battle. The standard ratio is three armored-vehicle losses for every personnel casualty. If that rate also applies to ground forces engaged against air forces, this means Iraqi casualties of about 60,000 in and around Kuwait. Of these, about 15,000 would be killed. By the time the ground campaign began, those casualties had probably increased to about 23,000 killed and about 55,000 wounded. Thus the war could well end sooner than I have projected above, and U.S. and allied casualties are likely to be lower than my original estimates for Phase 3.

As I had anticipated, Phase 3 has begun with a dazzling display of American virtuosity in ground and air-to-ground combat. (The air forces, of course, have not stopped fighting; they have merely shifted a major portion of their effort to close support of the ground forces.) By the time this is published, we shall know whether or not the battle has gone as I anticipated. I envisioned a wide and deep envelopment of Iraqi forces in Kuwait by a sweep of armored and mechanized forces through the desert from

SADDAM'S SOVIET CONNECTION

EVERYBODY knows that without the long stockpiling of Soviet arms, Saddam Hussein could never have attacked Iran or invaded Kuwait. Less known is the major Soviet role in building up Saddam's security and intelligence services: the basis of his absolute power. President Gorbachev's peace initiative has to be seen against this background. The Soviet investment in Iraq's absolutist regime has been vast. Moscow did not want it all to be blown by an allied land war.

The April 1972 Soviet Friendship Treaty with Iraq was one of the earliest of its kind. The initiative was taken by the Iraqis in February of that year when a Ba'ath Party delegation went to Moscow. At that time, Egypt was still the main focus of Soviet interest in the Arab world, until, on July 18, Anwar Sadat expelled the 17,000 Soviet advisors from Egypt. Thereafter, Soviet influence in the area was, in effect, divided between the two rival Ba'athist regimes: Saddam Hussein's in Iraq, and Hafez Assad's in Syria.

In late 1973, Saddam Hussein personally negotiated the Iraqi–Soviet security and intelligence deals with Gorbachev's mentor, KGB chief Yuri Andropov. In short, Andropov gave Saddam the recipe for absolute power; in return, Saddam gave the Soviets the means for relatively easy spying, notably on Saudi Arabia, through Iraqi embassies in neighboring countries.

On detailed lines prepared by the KGB, the Iraqi state security service (the Amn) was completely reorganized. On the enforcement side, the Soviets supplied sophisticated torture equipment to the Amn. Simultaneously Iraqi military intelligence (the Estikhbarat) was modeled on the lines of the Soviet GRU. Soviet-style border guards were also trained to form the Mukhabarat. In overall charge of the all-pervasive security apparatus is Saddam's younger brother, Barzan Takriti, who went to Moscow on the eve of Saddam's 1980 decision to wage war on Iran.

More is known about the Estikhbarat than the rest of the apparatus, by way of a leak by Ba'athist dissidents in 1979 of a key forty-page document. The document, the *Strategic Work Plan*, revealed a far-reaching organization, plotting and executing assassinations and other terrorist operations abroad.

Iraqi dissidents are not the only victims. The 1983 attempt to assassinate the Israeli ambassador in London, Shlomo Argov (incidentally, a friend of mine), was masterminded by the Estikhbarat. And when, last August 15, Abu Abbas, the Iraq-based Palestine Liberation Front leader, called for attacks on U.S. interests, it is hardly likely that the GRU and the KGB were unaware of whatever plans were being concocted. Did the Soviets, in pursuance of the Malta summit proclamation that the cold war was over, pass any such intelligence on to the CIA or the DIA?

As regards military espionage, the Estikhbarat was (and possibly has continued to be) under overall Soviet direction. As part of the Soviet–Iraqi deal, Iraqi military attachés in "target countries" were to provide reports on "nuclear-, bacteriological-, and chemical-warfare installations." They were also to find out all they could about NATO forces in the Mediterranean area. All this, of course, is additional to the more publicized Soviet military supplies: $6 billion worth between 1974 and 1979, plus $8.2 billion between 1980 and 1985.

To look at such background is not to suggest automatically that Gorbachev's Kremlin approved Saddam Hussein's annexation of Kuwait. His ambitions are his own, as is his megalomania. But Gorbachev's support for the UN resolutions has remained marginal and passive, hardly justifying Secretary of State James Baker's readiness to hail him as an ally. And by the best accounts, Soviet advisors have continued to guide Iraqi units during the Gulf War.

Gorbachev's motives are clearly mixed. He wanted to do nothing to spoil his international aura. Disapproving of a client state's aggression was a cheap way of maintaining his halo, latterly polished up by the Nobel Peace Prize. Approving of a U.S.-directed land war was something else. —BRIAN CROZIER

Mr. Crozier, an NR *contributing editor, is author of, most recently,* The Gorbachev Phenomenon.

the west, and Marine amphibious forces from the Gulf in the east. I expected a "triple envelopment" to be completed by an airborne and air-assault operation between these two pincers by the 82nd Airborne Division and the 101st Air Assault Division. If there is any fight left in the Republican Guard to the north, they will be held off by air-supported blocking forces from these three contingents, while their main elements attack the Iraqis in central and southern Kuwait from the rear.

It was this scenario that led me to expect the war in and around Kuwait might be concluded by March 15. Depending on how those operations end, however, General Schwarzkopf and his superiors may face a difficult decision: Should the allied forces advance into Iraq as far as Baghdad?

If the likely decisive conclusion of the campaign against the Iraqi occupiers of Kuwait should lead to a general Iraqi surrender, by the government either of Saddam Hussein or of a successor, then the war will be over, and an opposed advance to Baghdad will be unnecessary. In that case, the United Nations Security Council may decide to send an occupying force to Baghdad. Such a force should be, in my opinion, predominantly Arab, under an Arab commander (probably Saudi Arabian or possibly Egyptian), and include relatively small American, British, and French contingents, if any.

If, however, the collapse of the Iraqi armies in the Kuwait–Basra region does not bring about an Iraqi surrender, it will be necessary to bring the war to a definitive conclusion in order to assure that the Security Council resolutions are fully applied. This will require an advance to Baghdad which may well be opposed by surviving companies of the Iraqi army. And it may require pacification of a capital city wracked by the chaos of a civil war between the Ba'athists (who may still be led by Saddam Hussein) and the previously suppressed Iraqi opposition. In this case, some of the Arab members of the coalition may prefer, for political reasons, not to be involved in fighting for control of Baghdad. Furthermore, the UN will probably wish to leave the control of the concluding phase of Operation Desert Storm in the hands of the United States, and American troops, accompanied by Arab units, will be likely to spearhead an opposed advance to Baghdad. This advance would be made through the desert west of the Tigris–Euphrates valley, to avoid the necessity for fighting a difficult operation through that valley, as the British armies did in 1915–1918. The British at that time did not have the means to move major forces through the desert; today we do.

Such a cross-desert move to Baghdad would mean an advance of about 350 miles, of which the last 50 miles will be through agricultural and urban areas, where the possibilities of delay and ambush are greater than in the desert, and the opportunities to maneuver less. Such an advance could be accomplished in four days, or might take as much as two weeks, depending on the opposition. That is not likely to be high, so a one-week advance seems a reasonable estimate.

Once Baghdad is occupied, the war will be over, even though scattered, low-level hostilities might continue throughout the country. Until a new Iraqi government is established and makes peace with the allies, there could be unrest, violence, and anti-coalition activity for some time, particularly in outlying regions to the north and west. But dealing with this will be pacification, not war.

Such an outcome should leave the Middle East more stable than it was when Saddam Hussein, his massive military machine, and his potential for nuclear weaponry created the powder keg which exploded into the present war. It will also result in at least a temporary peace.

A successful military conclusion, combined with firm and understanding diplomacy, should enable us to bring our Arab allies and our Israeli allies to the conference table. While the past decade has seen an erosion of the tremendous reserve of goodwill that the U.S. had (with little or no conscious effort) built up in the Middle East, a military success will place us in the enviable position of being able to exert the combined power of strength, prestige, and friendship upon all the regional participants in an Arab–Israeli peace conference. Resolution of this hitherto intractable problem may become possible. ☐

ON THE HOMEFRONT

REBIRTH OF A NATION

WILLIAM J. BENNETT

A RECENT episode of *Saturday Night Live* opened with a skit parodying the Pentagon's press briefings on the Gulf War. It featured a Dick Cheney look-alike and a Marine general. Nothing new there, of course; the government has always been fair game for spoofs. But what made this sketch different—and in some ways significant—was that the object of ridicule was not Cheney or the military, but the press, presented as a pack of baying wolves. The Defense Secretary, infinitely patient, explained that they would be happy to answer any questions that did not endanger military operations, whereupon the press badgered him with such questions as, "Could you tell us the date the ground war will begin?" or "Which of America's half-million troops in the region are most vulnerable to an Iraqi attack?"

When *Saturday Night Live*, the counter-culture comedy show par excellence, prefers the military to the media, a major cultural shift is taking place. Charles Krauthammer has written that, except for revolution, nothing changes a country more than war. And in the reaction to war with Iraq the contours of a new and more confident America can be seen. A successful prosecution of the Gulf War may replace Vietnam as one of the defining events in the American psyche.

It was a long time in coming. Ronald Reagan began us on this road to recovery with his firm leadership in the Eighties. The prudent use of force—by President Reagan in Grenada and Libya, by President Bush in Pan-

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Mr. Bennett is an NR *senior editor.*

ama—moved us further along the road to recovery. But these were victories in miniature. We still could not claim a military victory on the magnitude of the Vietnam defeat. Doubts remained.

An American-led Allied victory in the Gulf, against a malevolent dictator with the fourth largest standing army in the world, will put such doubts to rest. We will remember the right lessons from Vietnam, but more important, we will at long last let go of the wrong ones.

We are already seeing a healthy reassessment of our fundamental institutions. The military, so unjustly maligned by the elites these past 25 years, is the war's big winner. When we called on our armed forces at a critical hour, they were there. A commercial republic needs to be reminded about the importance of things like duty, honor, virtue, and the hitching up of one's purposes to larger purposes beyond the self. The military is teaching us a civics lesson.

In the popular culture, we may finally move beyond the spate of Vietnam movies like *Born on the Fourth of July*, *Platoon*, and *Apocalypse Now*, where we were instructed on morality and national security by the Oliver Stones of the world. By this time next year, I wouldn't be at all surprised to see some new titles: *Day of the Patriot*? *Combat Ready: The Story of Colin Powell*? perhaps even *The Bridge over the River Tigris*?

In sharp contrast to the military's performance is that of the mainline churches. Their leaders have demonstrated, once again, that on matters of profound moral importance, they have virtually nothing useful, significant, or specifically religious to say. Their marked inability to make the classic distinctions between the use of force in a just manner for right purposes and the use of violence to advance evil is a sign of sheer moral exhaustion. That we can no longer look to the spokesmen of most of the mainline American religious institutions on important moral issues is bad news indeed. That they have become increasingly irrelevant to the public debate is, alas, the good news.

The press has also lost ground. In reporting the war, many journalists are doing what they do best: informing the American people. But some of the press act as if they were also our moral and intellectual guardians. There is the claim, for example, by Marvin Kalb (formerly of NBC, now of Harvard), that "in a war the primeval patriotic instincts of the American people rise to the surface . . . and any institution that seems to be critical of the troops and those who command them will be regarded with deep suspicion."

Kalb seems to be saying: The American people need the press to protect them from their own worst instincts. That sounds a little wide (and maybe a little left) of the mark. It omits the conclusion that the press may have some instincts of its own. Indeed, the public's concern about the press arises from the fact that some reporters seem concerned that the Reagan defense buildup is being vindicated to excess, or that the military is looking a little too good and the course of the war is going a little too well. So when the press offers itself to the American people as protection against the charms of

PRIME TIME

SATURDAY *Night Live* as described by Bill Bennett was conscious satire. For unconscious satire you had to turn to C-Span's series of programs, *Inside Time Magazine*, in which the cameras eavesdropped on the February 8 editorial conference of the magazine's Washington bureau.

Stanley Cloud, Washington bureau chief, began a discussion of the Baghdad reporting by CNN and Peter Arnett. He thought the real issue was Senator Alan Simpson's attack on Arnett and "superpatriots and how they act during the war." He had sat between two senators at a dinner who had said that Arnett was related to Communists.

This proved a congenial theme. An unidentified *Time*man thought that this "sounds like a note [Representative Bob] Dornan would be sounding." Hays Corey agreed, throwing in the names of Robert Walker (R., Pa.) and Newt Gingrich (R., Ga.) as notorious superpatriots.

This set Stanley Cloud off on a series of dark speculations: "Gingrich is another one. . . . The issue is not whether [Arnett is] an honest reporter. The issue is whether they automatically assume that anyone behind the enemy lines is working for the enemy. . . . [The issue is] the demagogues and how they're treating this thing."

His deputy, Laurence Barrett, detected the superpatriots in another sinister maneuver. "This also fits in with Gingirch's attack on [Representative Dave] McCurdy and [Ron] Dellums as being not sufficiently redblooded to be on [the House Intelligence Committee]."

The superpatriot threat to the U.S. was seemingly everywhere. One unidentifed journalist pointed out that Senator John McCain (R., Ariz.) had "organized some sort of citizens' group of superpatriots." Another thought it would be "interesting" to see what Dan Quayle thought of all this since he had been "playing the Spiro Agnew part last week."

Stanley Cloud sent the discussion in a new direction with an attack on "demagoguing" by politicians against reporters like Arnett. Some of these politicians, it was argued, were demagoguing dishonestly to deflect attention from troubles they were in. This reminded Hays Corey about Senator McCain and his "group of superpatriots."

Jerome Cramer was worried too about McCain's group: "They wear brown shirts and march around." But fortunately this was "small potatoes." The real threat was that "the new world order means rearming the industrial space complex."

Stanley Cloud ended the discussion with a novel twist: "The pressure [to end the war] will come from the Right rather than the peace movement. There will be a lot of pressure, if we start getting thousands killed in the ground war, to send in nuclear bombs and end it." Laughter, chuckles, nods, end of meeeting.

That is how *Time* reporters talk when they know the world is watching. What on earth do they say when no one is listening?

—GEOFFREY MORRIS

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the military, Americans are skeptical.

We recognize that those doing the fighting have the graver responsibility than those sitting on the sidelines, giving the play-by-play. We want the press there, but not in the way. And I wouldn't be surprised that, as the *Saturday Night Live* skit illustrates, the people would like to see reporters exhibit a bit more civility and common sense when asking our military leaders questions. Skepticism is one thing; prosecutorial zeal quite another.

Sweeping Reappraisals

THE EVENTS in the Gulf remind the world (and should remind elite opinion) that America is usually on the right side of a war—indeed, on the right side of history. That was true in Vietnam as well. The Vietnamese boat people who fled Ho Chi Minh's paradise—some to America, others, tragically, to their unknown graves beneath the South China Sea—attest to that. Notwithstanding, in today's history books a great many pages are devoted to the "lessons" of Vietnam that point to the opposite moral. In his history of the United States, Henry Steele Commager argued that Vietnam showed America's vulnerability and raised doubts about its supremacy and intentions. As the *Wall Street Journal* put it recently, "In the years that passed from Vietnam into Watergate and through the reflexive opposition to the Reagan Presidency, an intellectual fascination with failure, limits, and the contrary seemed to develop." If President Bush is successful in his prosecution of this war, and all signs point to this, he will in effect force a sweeping reappraisal of these assumptions. Historians will have to write about an American success rather than a failure.

This in turn might lead people to ask how such a nation came to be, to ask about the philosophy behind our success, "the canon behind the cannons." The impressive performance of our technology in the Gulf might even entice a few more students to pursue math and science, to be on the cutting edge of the next generation of technology, maybe to gain a new appreciation for modern weapons themselves.

The philosphy is moral as well as technical, and as such, quintessentially American. The air war in Iraq and Kuwait has demonstrated that weapons also save lives, quite apart from saving countries. When you can shoot Patriot missiles up to shoot Scud missiles down, you're saving lives. When you can shoot other weapons from a distance, without exposing your troops to close fire, you're saving lives. When you can use laser beams to guide a bomb into the front door of a defense-ministry building without taking down its neighbor, you're saving lives. Ask the Israelis. Ask the Saudis.

The political implications of these questions ought to be enormous. Those who voted against authorizing the President to use force ought to explain their vote. I am not accusing them of voting in bad faith or of a lack of patriotism. I am accusing them of being wrong on a fundamental issue. Their vote ought to be a matter they are called on to defend.

That is after all what politics is supposed to be about in a free society. Important acts, important votes, should have important political consequences. Senators and House members should be asked to explain how it was that they voted to the left of the United Nations on this one—and then to convince the American people that they are ready for prime time in international affairs. Let them also explain exactly what, short of another Pearl Harbor, might constitute a justifiable use of American military might. My guess is that the politicians who voted against the President will want to change the subject. We owe it to our system to make sure that we hold them accountable for their actions, so that future politicians will be taken with the seriousness they deserve.

Fred Carlson

Back Home

WITH A VICTORY in the Gulf, critics will say that we should now have as vigorous an effort at home as we had abroad. That is true, provided we recognize the limitations of government power. There is no Patriot missile for the social and domestic problems of welfare, education, poverty, unwed mothers, and child abuse—with the possible exception of a massive infusion of sound moral values. Federal involvement in these matters is simply not a sufficient solution—in many cases, it is exacerbating the problems it was to address. We need to relearn that these problems require not a program launched from Washington, but matters of the heart and soul: of family, church, neighborhood, and school; of habit and character; of personal aspiration, self-discipline, and hard work. The President, with the great prestige he has now garnered, could use his bully pulpit to great effect on these issues. And he would be addressing a people whose general self-confidence had been restored.

The Gulf War has triggered an important debate about America's role in the world. To that debate I would add that there is a large middle ground between de facto isolationism and an all-embracing interventionism. It is that large middle ground, known as responsible, selective engagement, that we should occupy. That we cannot be the world's "policeman" is a truism. But the *reductio ad absurdum* of this is that we cannot act *anywhere*. For America to pick up the sword in some circumstances is a moral imperative. And not to pick up the sword in some places—where evil is on the march, where innocent people are being massacred, where vital interests and allies are under attack—is moral abdication. Sometimes crises arise which do not fall clearly into either category. But such are the uneasy burdens of a great, and good, power.

Upon his departure from America, Lech Walesa left us with these words: "Take care of this country. If you do not lead us, who will?" We are now demonstrating that there is an answer. America will lead, for no other country can make the moral and military difference. This will make a few people, here and elsewhere, unhappy. But it will make countless others happy—and encouraged. They've been waiting a long time. □

PRIVATIZING APARTHEID

ENDING ETHNIC SOCIALISM

WALTER E. WILLIAMS

APARTHEID, though regarded by most of the world as an expression of capitalism, is in fact ethnic socialism. It is the protection of organized white privileges against the operation of free-market forces. Implementing that vision required the use of force against whites as well as blacks.

For example, the government had to force white mine-owners to acknowledge white supremacy through the Mines & Works Acts of 1911 and 1926, which limited certain jobs to whites only—thus removing the right to hire blacks for those jobs. The Natives Land Act of 1913 was a culmination of previous laws that sought to drive blacks off the land to prevent competition with white farmers (it also provided cheaper labor for industry).

In 1922, South Africa suffered its most violent strike. The dispute grew out of mine-owners violating various laws and regulations restricting the number of blacks who could be hired for certain jobs. It was supported by the South African Communist Party, then entirely white, and its slogan was "Workers of the World, Fight and Unite, for a White South Africa." The strike had to be put down with artillery and planes; nearly three hundred whites died, and a year later Prime Minister Jan Smuts and his party were run out of office. General Hertzog's National Party and Creswell's Labor Party formed a coalition, campaigned on the promise to enforce white privilege, and won the 1924 elections.

The new government passed tough laws to promote "civilized labor policy": reserving certain jobs for whites only; outlawing black unions; restrict-

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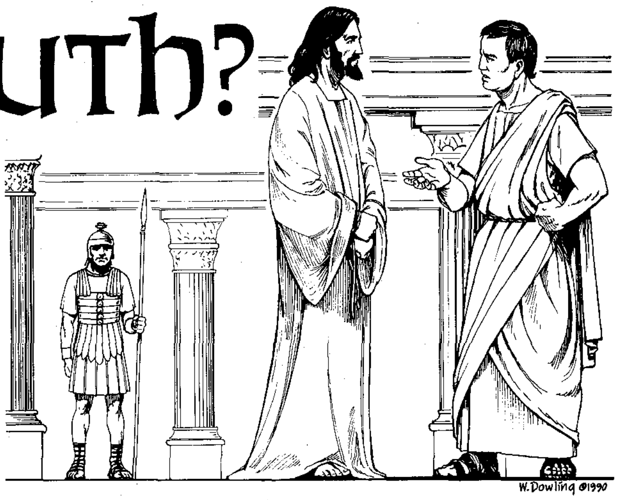
Mr. Williams is John M. Olin Distinguished Professor of Economics at George Mason University and the author of South Africa's War against Capitalism *(Praeger).*

what is truth?



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ing movement of blacks; punishing businessmen who violated "civilized labor policy" through fines and denial of customs privileges and the right to do business with government.

The struggle for white privilege was a struggle against market forces and what they imply: voluntary exchange. The free market was an enemy of race-based privilege. If white mine-owners and other businessmen (who shared the ideology of racial supremacy advocated by their workers) had not hired blacks as foremen or underground steam-engine drivers, there would have been no need for a law prohibiting them from doing so. Yet white employers repeatedly evaded, contravened, and otherwise violated both the letter and the spirit of apartheid laws—often seeing the resulting fines as a routine business cost.

Black employees willing to work for cheaper wages (who in many cases outperformed whites) meant greater profits for owners. The prospect of greater profits tested and broke white racial solidarity. White South Africans continuously complained that capitalism could not be trusted to protect white privilege—and they were right. Apartheid required extensive economic controls to suppress peaceable, mutually advantageous, voluntary exchange.

The past, unfortunately, is one of the immutable facts of life. Only through rapid economic growth can South Africa overcome the injustices of apartheid. A 6 or 8 per cent annual growth rate, quite achievable, would see current incomes doubling every eight or 12 years.

Hopes depend on just how willing South Africans are to restrict government power. The South African government owns outright (or through quasi-government enterprises) railways, harbors, airlines, housing, hospitals, the electric and telephone industries, coal-to-gas conversion plants, television stations, huge land tracts, and universities. What the government does not own it controls. Entry conditions and prices are regulated; and the government even mandates the composition of business-asset portfolios.

In order for South Africa to achieve a high rate of economic growth, it must commit itself to a number of major policy changes. Protectionist tariffs must be lifted, particularly those restricting the import of Western technology. There must be major change in the central bank policy which restricts foreign investment and produces a 20 per cent rate of inflation. South Africa must eliminate its agricultural marketing boards which lead to an inefficient allocation of agricultural resources and raise the prices of all agricultural and dairy products.

In particular, it must eliminate collusive regulations and controls on

THE STRANGE DEATH OF APARTHEID

ON A perfect summer's day a couple of weeks ago, with the surf up and the clouds tumbling like lemmings over the edge of Table Mountain, President F. W. de Klerk tolled the bell for South Africa's old order. At the opening of parliament in Cape Town he announced the impending repeal of the legislative remnants of apartheid: the Group Areas Act, which segregates residential land; the Land Acts, which reserve 87 per cent of the country's area for whites; and the Population Registration Act, which classifies people by race.

The death knell was heard clearly enough in parliament, where members of the opposition Conservative Party walked out of de Klerk's opening address, shouting "Traitor!" and "He is burying the flag of the Afrikaner nation!" But it was not heard in the streets outside, where 15,000 supporters of the African National Congress and the Pan-Africanist Congress demanded that de Klerk close the "white racist" parliament instead of opening it. There were fiery speeches from the baroque balconies of city hall, with he crowd smothering a statue of King Edward VII for a better view. But the demonstration went off peacefully, which is saying something in South Africa these days.

The pressures on the "reform process," from Left and Right, could hardly be better illustrated. The segregationist Conservatives have declared that the fight will go on, but have offered no alternative to de Klerk's policies. Under the existing constitution another "whites only" election—their best hope of regaining power—is not due until 1994. And by then, de Klerk devoutly hopes that a new multiracial constitution will be in place. The Conservatives must wait on the sidelines, trusting that the reforms will fail through deadlock at the negotiating table or mayhem and bloodletting.

The miracle is, they haven't collapsed yet. This is partly because the ANC (or that part of its leadership which is in favor of negotiations) has come round to the government's way of thinking. It was the government which first proposed a multi-party conference, consisting of all groups that have demonstrable support. The ANC held out for an elected "constituent assembly" (which it would expect to dominate), but then adopted the government's proposal as its own. Where difficulties have arisen, as over the notorious paragraph 3 of the Pretoria Minute in which the ANC "suspends the armed struggle," compromises have been cobbled together. The latest fudge, by which the ANC promises not to create new military structures or to engage in "war talk" (one hopes Mrs. Winnie Mandela is listening) has sent the two sides pottering off again down the road to a multi-party conference, perhaps in May.

Mr. de Klerk and Mr. Nelson Mandela, deputy president of the ANC, clearly get on famously over the tea and biscuits (though, curiously, they are still not on first-name terms). But while Mr. de Klerk shows every sign of being able to deliver his white constituency, there are grave doubts about whether Mandela has much influence over young black militants. The Mandela name may produce an earnest liberal glow in Georgetown, but in South Africa his pleas for peace and reconciliation often fall on deaf ears. When he told the warring factions in Natal to "Take your knives and *pangas* and throw them

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Mr. Taylor is the Johannesburg correspondent for the Daily Telegraph *of London.*

business entry. After the government deregulated taxis several years ago, blacks acquired minivans and virtually took over the taxi business in the major cities. Deregulation not only provided business ownership opportunities but vastly improved transportation for black workers and consumers.

By deregulating business activities in central business districts, South Africa has already begun to tap the robust entrepreneurial spirit of thousands of street peddlers, some of whom have opened up stores. Those who belittle such "cooperation with the system" ignore the fact that it not only means income for petty capitalists, it also provides training and experience in buying, selling, and risk taking. Some of South Africa's petty capitalists may end up following in the footsteps of American ex-peddlers such as James Cash Penny, John Wanamaker, and the Bloomingdales.

But freeing blacks to compete will not fully solve the problem of economic injustice. South Africa presents one of the more compelling arguments for some form of redistribution or compensation. Current generations of blacks have suffered injustices at the hands of the current generation of whites.

The problem is that most discussions of income redistribution call for government schemes whereby earnings of white households and businesses are taken and given to blacks in the forms of higher pension payments, housing and business subsidies, food, and medical care. Despite its broad appeal, the numbers do not add up. There are too few whites and too many blacks.

Ignoring other non-whites, South Africa has about thirty million blacks and five million whites, six blacks to each white. In order for government to give each black R1,000 (roughly $380) a year, or R83 ($32) per month, it would have to take R6,000 ($2,280) from each white or R24,000 ($9,120) from each white family of four. But the annual per-capita income of whites in South Africa is only R15,000 ($5,700). Even if such an income-redistribution scheme that at best would deliver blacks a paltry $32 per month were politically feasible, it would be a death sentence to the economy.

Suppose government also finances income redistribution with profit taxes on South Africa's businesses. In 1987, South Africa's top six mining houses and the Financial Mail's top 100 industrial firms earned R8.7 billion ($3.3 billion) in after-tax profits. If these profits were completely taken away for income redistribution, each black would receive R24 ($9.20) a month. And businesses having lost their profits would have little incentive to produce and invest the next year. Thus, wrecking the economy by imposing confiscatory taxes on white households and businesses would give

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in the sea," no one took a blind bit of notice; and when he told children to return to their schools, the teachers went on strike. Only weeks after his release from prison a year ago, youngsters, angry with his moderation, had cut his portrait from their Nelson Mandela T-shirts.

The Pan-Africanist Congress, like the Conservative Party, has said it wants nothing to do with a multi-party conference. With its chilling slogan of "One Settler, One Bullet," the PAC appears to be increasingly popular with the young lumpenproletariat of the townships. Among the lost generation which foolishly chose "liberation before education," anti-white feelings run very deep. When PAC supporters chant: "Peace among the Africans, war against the enemy," there is no doubt who the enemy is. Mr. Joe Slovo, white leader of the Communist Party, learned this the hard way at a recent rally. A section of the crowd began chanting: "One Slovo, One Bullet."

It is this gallery that ANC militants must also play to. The military efforts of the ANC's armed wing, *Umkhonto we Size* (Spear of the Nation), have never amounted to more than a few tawdry township killings, and an occasional bomb. But a liberation myth is in the making, the myth of a white, racist, colonialist regime being overthrown by force. Hence the importance to the government of Mr. Chris Hani, head of the armed wing, and now the likely successor to Mr. Mandela. I recently asked a senior government minister whether he could deal with Mr. Hani. "If he can deliver, it's fine by me," he said, grinning a somewhat wolfish grin. "We've learned that lesson. We don't want to deal with puppets any more."

White liberals, of course, watch the unfolding events with a mixture of self-righteousness and indignation. The Democratic Party has had its clothes well and truly stolen by the governing National Party, and watches, powerless, as old enemies line up for photo opportunities. It is also beginning to dawn on some liberals that the ANC might not be the bastion of freedom and democracy they had fondly imagined it to be. On the dreaded subject of the crime wave—a black crime wave, it must be emphasized—liberals are beginning to sound distinctly authoritarian. The murder rate last year was, after all, five times that of the U.S.

The extraordinary events at the trial of Winnie Mandela—when half the defendants absconded, one key witness was apparently kidnapped by ANC members, and the other witnesses declared themselves too frightened to give evidence—were too much even for the liberal press. The *Weekly Mail*, who had been a thorn in the flesh of the Botha government, described the ANC as "tarnished" and questioned its commitment to justice. "The problem was symbolized by the arrogant ANC marshalls who took control of the streets, strutting around in make-shift military fatigues, and abusing journalists and others." The headline on its editorial read: "Is This Rule by the Toyi-Toyi Macoute?"

The toyi-toyi is a sinister shuffling "war dance" much favored by ANC crowds. It is mindless and intimidating. Byron wrote that he wanted slavery to be swept from the African continent, so that he could "gaze on the first dance of their freedom." So as saintly Mr. Mandela and nice Mr. de Klerk go wandering off down Negotiation Road, we must hope that the first dance of the "new South Africa" does not turn out to be the toyi-toyi. —PETER TAYLOR each black a paltry $42.20 per month.

A better approach is the compensation scheme put forward by the Free Market Foundation of Southern Africa. This calls for the South African government to give up all its property. Shares of stock for the property would be divided equally—but only among the black population. According to 1987 estimates, government assets are valued in excess of $250 billion. If divided equally among its black population, each person would receive a one-time payment in excess of $9,000, or $36,000 for a family of four. A family might keep its shares or sell them to start a business, send kids to college, or build a home.

This proposal has several advantages. It is a gesture of goodwill; it reduces the power of the central government; and it presents a challenge to any new tyrannical government, which would face the task of dispossessing blacks. Such redistribution would have no harmful effects on the economy. Indeed, it should help it, since government ownership is less efficient than private ownership. The sole losers would be politicians whose political patronage would diminish.

The response to this proposal from most quarters is, alas, not that encouraging. After decades of abuse by a powerful government, blacks are perhaps more interested in changing the color of people who wield the power rather than eliminating the power itself. As such they confirm French philosopher Frédéric Bastiat's prediction: "As soon as plundered classes gain political power, they establish a system of reprisals against other classes . . . even though it is against their own interests."

The second argument, that giving poor blacks shares would set them up for exploitation, follows from the view that wisdom is the monopoly of an elite. Ironically, this view has a striking similarity to the rhetoric of apartheid. D. F. Malan, who led the Nationalist Party to its 1948 victory, said, "I regard the Bantu [blacks] not as strangers and not as a menace to white people, but as our children for whose welfare we are responsible."

If South Africa goes down the road of ethnic socialism under black management, the main sufferers will be ordinary blacks. White corporations and white professionals will simply cut a deal with the new political elite, which will gradually be corrupted. This has, after all, been the pattern throughout most of post-colonial Africa. Ordinary blacks will suffer from the economic failure that socialism of every kind creates, without sharing in the economic rents enjoyed by the coalition of the black elite and favored white corporations.

Yet blacks are especially well positioned to seize the opportunities offered by a growing capitalist society—and for an obvious reason. Because of apartheid, blacks could not expect handouts and protections received by whites; thereby they did not develop the welfare mentality of many white South Africans, particularly those in the petty bureaucracy of apartheid who now face unemployment with no useful skills. Blacks, by contrast, had to make do, and some have done quite well. What they mostly need now is economic freedom and a non-racial society in which they can exercise their talents freely. ☐

WEST MEETS EAST

GHETTO AND GULAG

CASSANDRA CHRONES MOORE

IN AN APPARENT toast to the dawn of a new era, the Russian Congress of People's Deputies in December legalized the private ownership of land. Predictably the reaction in the West was enthusiastic. Another tenet of Communist dogma had fallen before the onslaught of the free world's market philosophy.

Sober analysis soon highlighted the restrictions and dampened Western ardor: peasants would have to hold the land for a minimum of ten years before they could dispose of it. Even then it could be resold only to the state, that is, to local governments. Western critics were quick to observe that the Russian legislation was simply another case of "too little reform, too late." Such restrictions, they implied, were alien to the American spirit of free enterprise. "It can't happen here" was the theme.

Not so fast. Look closely at these requirements and then at U.S. housing policy, particularly the highly touted plans to sell public housing to tenants. When the two are compared, the Soviet's land policy begins to look more and more like the elementary-school game of "Just like me!"

The current U.S. scheme to return public housing to its inhabitants springs from a troubled history. Public housing, seen in the Fifties and Sixties as the panacea for all social ills, fell into disrepute as the buildings themselves fell into disrepair. "The projects" became black ghettos, refuges for drug dealers and criminals, unsafe for anyone not protected by a gang. Postal carriers refused to enter; even armed policemen were reluctant to go inside.

Finally, in 1987, in a desperate attempt to find a remedy to blight by encouraging individual initiative, the Housing and Community Development Act established the right of tenant groups to manage and eventually to own their own units. The press applauded and the tenant-management movement, inspired by women like Kimi Gray of Washington, D.C., gathered steam. Projects were to be cleaned up, painted, and repaired. The tenants themselves would do the work, helped generously by a large infusion of HUD cash. The renovated units would then be sold and pride of ownership would move the owners into the economic mainstream.

Tenant "empowerment" became the cornerstone of Jack Kemp's Housing Opportunities for People Everywhere (Hope). It was an excellent idea, but the National Affordable Housing Act, which codified the HOPE proposals and established procedures for sale, embodied the old, bureaucratic mindset more than Kemp's new thinking.

The restrictions Congress wrote into the bill, like the compromises of the

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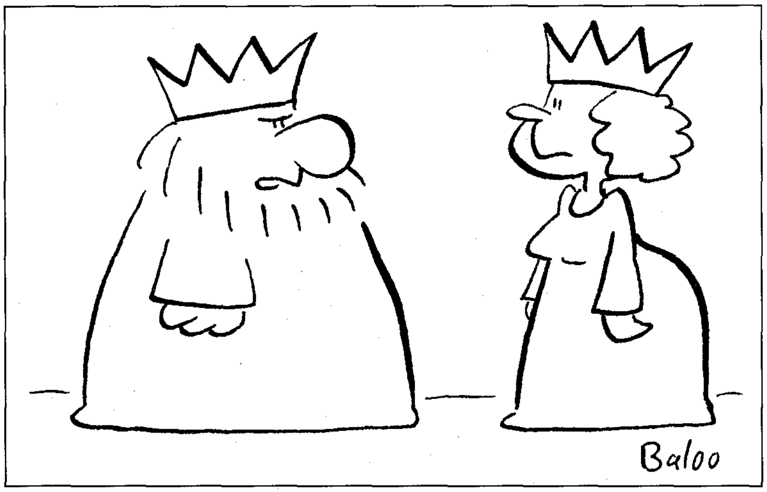
Mrs. Moore is an adjunct scholar with the Competitive Enterprise Institute.

Soviet program, made it virtually certain that property would remain in the hands of the state. A sale to a tenant is a sale in name only. Unlike the new owners of British council houses, who received clear title and could dispose of the property as they wished, the American tenant who buys can do little with his "property" except live in it. His resale market and his potential profit are severely limited. Given the low-income tenant's eligibility for federal-housing subsidies covering rent and utilities, what incentives does he have to buy?

Should he buy and then attempt to resell, he faces Soviet-style restrictions. In general he can sell only to another low-income purchaser. Even then a tenant management group or cooperative has the right of first refusal. If the low-income buyer backs out of the purchase contract, then the public-housing authority or certain non-profit organizations have the right to match the price. A "non-low-income" buyer, should one ever emerge, is even farther down the totem pole: he can buy only if these tenant groups, housing authorities, and non-profits all refuse.

And as Tom Bethell has pointed out, elaborate "Restrictions on Resale by Homeowners" established by the housing bill are aimed specifically at ensuring that the hapless tenant/buyer can never make an "undue profit." If he resells within the first five years, he can recoup only his down payment, plus the percentage of the equity increase that reflects his initial investment. If he puts $5,000 down on a $50,000 unit, for example, and the unit resells for $55,000, he may walk away with an extra $500. He is caught: if the market drops, he must still repay the subsidized loans; if the market rises he reaps little benefit. Congress thus imposes on the poor severe restrictions that the middle-class recipients of, say, subsidized housing loans would never tolerate.

He does get to keep the value of any improvements he has made, plus an allowance for inflation; and after *twenty* years, if he stays in the unit, he will have paid off the loans and will have clear title. The Russian peasant, by contrast, only has to work the land for *ten* years.



"I sent those stupid U.S. advisors home—they told me I should lose weight!"

The specter of "speculation" looms over both initiatives. Russian legislators claimed that speculators "with no interest in fostering agricultural improvements" would corner the market. Nobody seems to have asked why "speculators" should immediately undermine their investments by neglecting to improve the land.

The U.S. resale restrictions were imposed to discourage speculators and prevent "windfall" profits while ensuring continued "affordability." The logic is flawed but the damage is real. By limiting profit and establishing Byzantine restrictions on resale—restrictions that will bind all subsequent purchasers—the law limits severely the incentive for maintenance and improvement, as well as the opportunity for economic advancement. The same perspective applies to the Soviet farmer who will think hard before improving land which he can resell only to the state at a state-determined price.

In the U.S. the regulations that effectively require units to be sold only to low-income families are particularly onerous: they perpetuate the economic segregation of the low-income ghetto. The right to sell to any willing buyer plus more favorable equity sharing provisions would set in motion the market forces that would in turn encourage a mix of incomes and a reasonable range of prices—in short, a healthier neighborhood. Speculation could be discouraged by limiting sales to "one to a customer."

Those most likely to benefit, both here and in Russia, are the administrators. U.S. resident management corporations and councils will see their power increase. It is they who will determine which tenants are "worthy" of a unit.

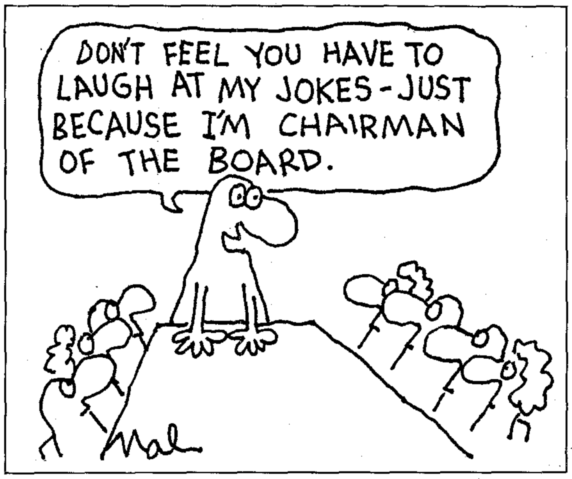
The power of Russian state collective farm managers and local councils who have the final say on "privatization" will also expand. It is they who will decide how much land will be distributed and to whom—provided, of course, that they can find a Charlie Brown to run for the football.

A weird and wonderful philosophy underlies both sets of restrictions. Certain congressmen oppose ownership and uphold the replacement provisions on the grounds that only the public-housing authorities can be trusted to manage the affairs of the poor. The responsibilities of ownership, they suggest, are an arcane mystery, to be pierced only by the middle and upper classes. While this idea directly contradicts the point of privatization, it is a dominant part of the "privatization" scheme Congress has adopted.

In the Soviet Union a peculiar mysticism tinges skepticism about the abilities of the Russian peasant to farm his own land after sixty years of collectives. Even Boris Yeltsin claims that the Russians "never have been accustomed to the terminology and even more to the practice of selling and buying land—the motherland."

Yeltsin and the deputies have short memories. Early in the century, after a series of now-forgotten reforms, 90 per cent of arable Russian land was cultivated by small proprietors. Production had increased and famine had disappeared. Were those peasants unaccustomed to the terminology and practice of purchase and sale? Were they reluctant to deal in pieces of the "motherland?" Certainly not; but it will be as difficult to convince the Soviet ideologues of this truth as it will be to convince liberal congressmen and entrenched administrators that the tenant who buys his own unit can do just fine without the "beneficient" intervention of the state. ☐

help!!!!


DON'T FEEL YOU HAVE TO LAUGH AT MY JOKES - JUST BECAUSE I'M CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD.
Mal

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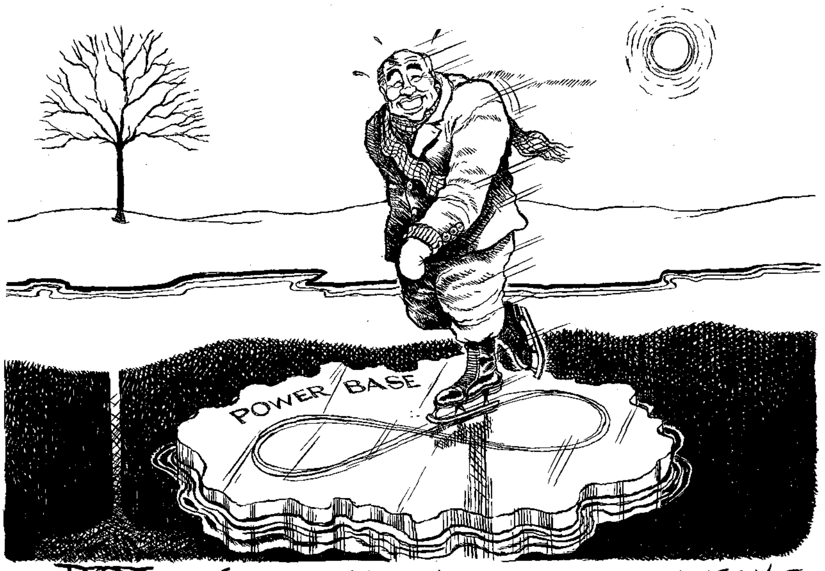

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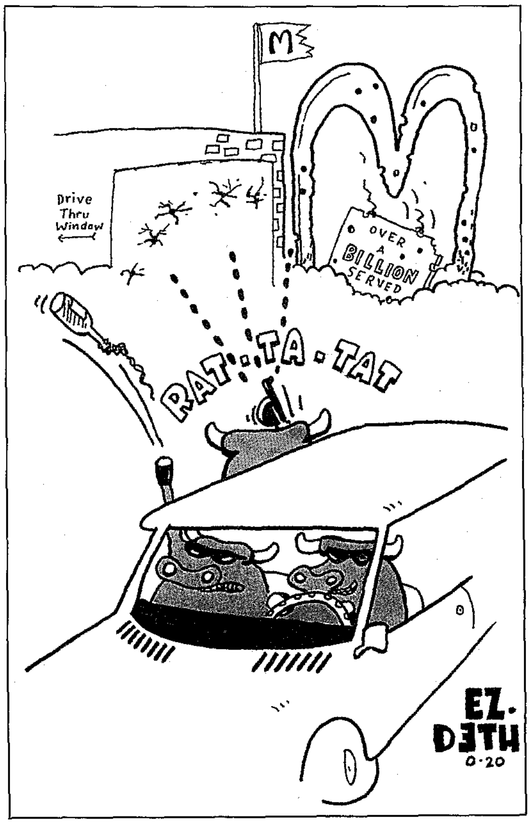
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Drive Thru Window
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Glimmericks

A couple who felt they were cheated
On warmth from the thermostat, greeted
  Those proverbial pests—
  Argumentative guests—
Because their discussions were heated.

GLORIA MAXSON

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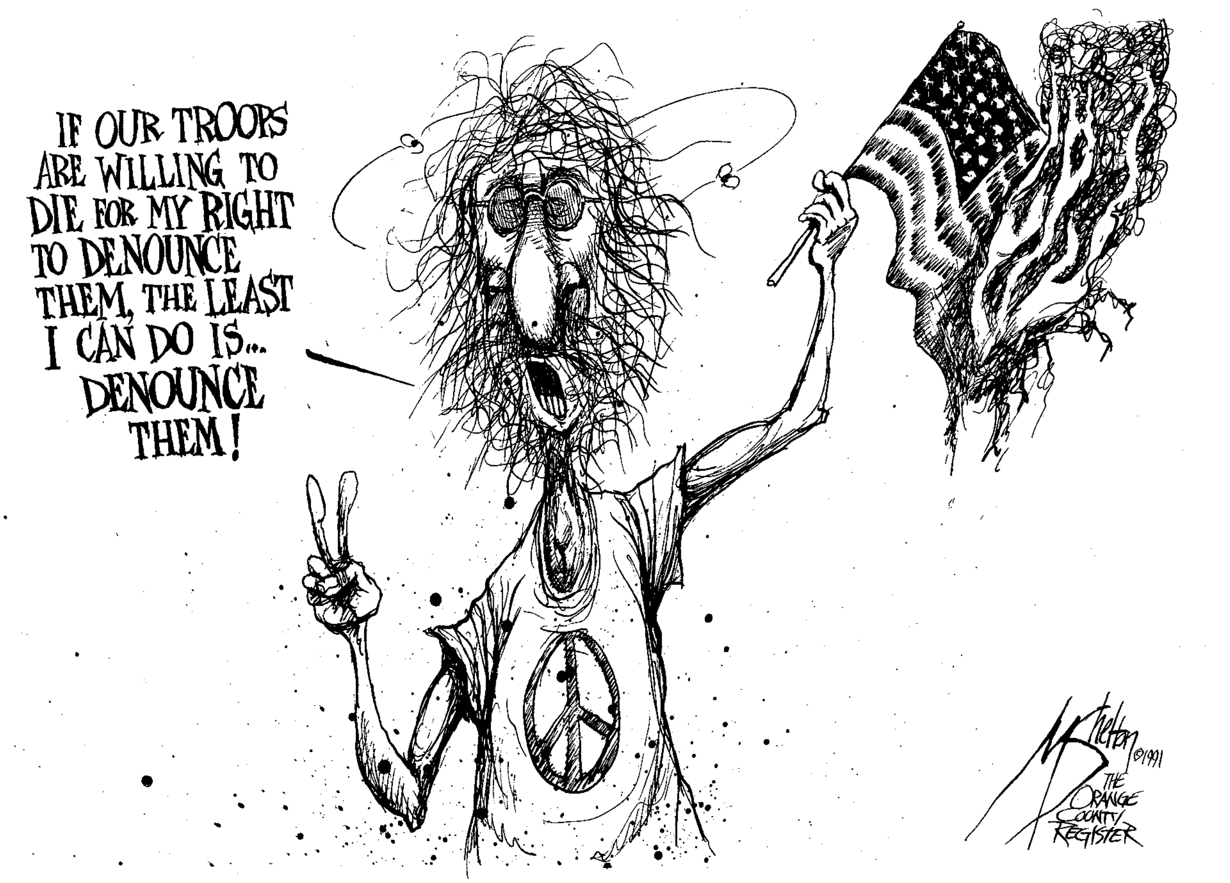
IF OUR TROOPS ARE WILLING TO DIE FOR MY RIGHT TO DENOUNCE THEM, THE LEAST I CAN DO IS... DENOUNCE THEM!
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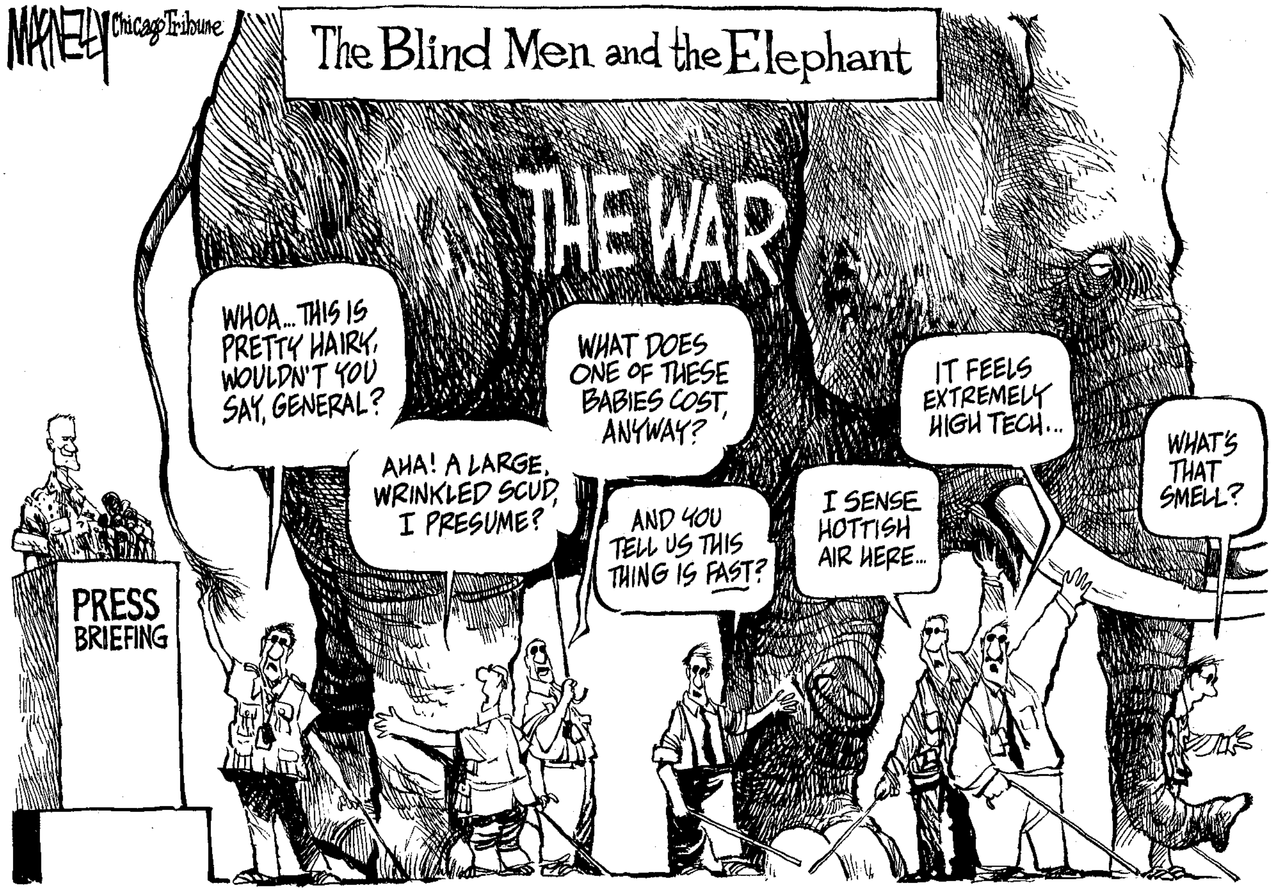
MACNELLY Chicago Tribune
The Blind Men and the Elephant
THE WAR
PRESS BRIEFING
WHOA... THIS IS PRETTY HAIRY, WOULDN'T YOU SAY, GENERAL?
AHA! A LARGE, WRINKLED SCUD, I PRESUME?
WHAT DOES ONE OF THESE BABIES COST, ANYWAY?
AND YOU TELL US THIS THING IS FAST?
I SENSE HOTTISH AIR HERE...
IT FEELS EXTREMELY HIGH TECH...
WHAT'S THAT SMELL?

BOOKS, ARTS & MANNERS

Words in Search of Meaning

JEFFREY HART

DAVID LEHMAN is a poet and critic who knows the score. This important book is an effort—highly successful in my judgment—to put the critic back in his place and give literature some breathing room. It represents an important civilizational effort, for reasons that will become clear below. *Signs of the Times* consists of two parts, separate in a sense, yet dove-tailed like the work of a Shaker artisan. The first part is concerned with the critical practice of deconstruction. The second deals with the Paul de Man scandal, and its devastating implications for deconstructionists.

That in the academy today literature is often pushed aside by theory is not news. Poems and novels simply disappear into a Grimpen Mire of structuralists, new historicists, and feminist deconstructionists; authors are displaced by verbally gesticulating critics, some of whom declare the "author" non-existent, the work of literature meaningless. To understand how such efforts are justified, we need a vest-pocket definition of deconstruction, the dominant mode of criticism today, which in its own way subsumes all the others. In its least political formulation, the history of deconstruction goes as follows.

Signs of the Times: Deconstruction and the Fall of Paul de Man, by David Lehman (Simon & Schuster, 318 pp., $21.95)

The great Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure argued at the turn of the century that language is a system of signs, the external relations of which are first arbitrary and then customary. A word such as "dog" has only a customary relationship to its furry referent. The meaning of a word therefore lies in its difference from other words: "dog" differs from "bog."

In an arguable reading of Saussure, American and European structuralists took advantage of the separation of the sign from the signified, a fateful maneuver, and read a poem as not *meaning* anything outside itself, but as a self-referential pattern of words, images, syllables, vowels, consonants, and Saussurian "differences." These procedures did "foreground" (to use contemporary academic jargon) some things in the poem we had not noticed before, but they did not—and by definition could not—deliver added insight into a poem's meaning or value.

Deconstruction is simply post-structuralism. (When you get the hang of it, these terms are decidedly non-formidable.) Spread across the continent from its beachhead at Yale, deconstruction asserts that when a work of literature is carefully examined it is found to contain contradictions that issue in self-destruction. Even what the work does not say can be critically important; in the new academic verbiage, "the presence of absence." Works of literature almost always turn out to be different from what they appear to the non-deconstructionist.

Mr. Lehman provides a hilarious sample deconstruction of the Gettysburg Address, noting that the phrase "our fathers" does not cohere with the birth imagery of "brought forth" and "conceived in liberty." Was the patriarchal hegemony trying to appropriate for the "fathers" the generative powers of "maternity"? Then again, maybe Lincoln intended his "text" to implode and destroy itself, and we could conclude that Father Abraham was actually an early opponent of the patriarchal hegemony, indeed its greatest satirist.

Of course, this procedure must ignore Lincoln's back-reference to Genesis, in which God the Father "brings forth" the cosmos, and to the Declaration of Independence, in which "our fathers" likewise "brought forth" a new nation, *novus ordo seclorum*, in which perspective Lincoln saw a "new birth" of freedom in the Emancipation. An old-fashioned critic, thinking of Lincoln's Biblical cadences, might observe that the author was well aware that his name was Abraham. But, of course, the deconstructionist knows there's no such thing as an author, only a text to be "interrogated" for its contradictions.

Were I not surrounded by all this in my own academic life, I might consider it too silly to take seriously. In my experience, the proponents of deconstruction, despite their glib posturings, have little training in philosophy or science, and little sense of establishing what is true, what is probable, and what is very likely false. For example, they commonly refer to the famous Heisenberg "uncertainty principle," which they cite as evidence that the meaning of a poem cannot be established. Revealingly, they write of Heisenberg's principle of "indeterminacy." But these are entirely different things. Heisenberg was referring to the difficulty of measuring the behavior of subatomic particles. He had no notion that their behavior is fundamentally "indeterminate." This mistaken use of Heisenberg mixes up epistemology with ontology. But, beyond that, Heisenberg was certainly *not* talking about poems.

But as the earlier example of the Gettysburg Address shows, deconstruction is not benignly silly. Mr. Lehman quotes the British Marxist Terry Eagleton, a remarkably arrogant *arriviste* who draws a fat salary at the University of Pennsylvania:

> "Post-structuralism was a product of that blend of euphoria and disillusionment, liberation and dissipation, carnival and catastrophe, which was 1968. Unable to break structures of state power, post-structuralism found it possible instead to subvert the structures of language. Nobody, at least, was likely to beat you over the head for doing so."

Not with a billy-club, perhaps, but possibly with rigorous scrutiny.

The deconstruction project has gone forward behind a Berlin Wall of jargon

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Mr. Hart, an NR *senior editor, is a professor of English at Dartmouth College.*

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**Penthouse* Magazine

William F. Buckley, Jr.

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that simply cannot be parodied because it already reads like parody: hegemonic, bi-polar enmities, privileging, valoring, problematizing, dismantlizing, contextualizing. Often the jargon has a revealing military character, as if the academic critic were dressed in fatigues, smoking a French cig in some Third World bunker. A "text" is "interrogated." The "poem" is a putative enemy. Why? Because it is an instrument of the "hegemony," of "privilege," of the "patriarchy." Remember, we're talking about Shakespeare and Dante.

To problematize the hegemony, of course, the deconstructionist treats all "texts" as equally lowborn. You can deconstruct the phone book as well as the Constitution or a poem by Yeats. The subtext, as they would put it, is: Where Homer was, there shall Frantz Fanon be.

About all this, Mr. Lehman is marvelously lucid. He is a good poet who believes, poor philistine, that poems actually mean something. Which, of course, they do.

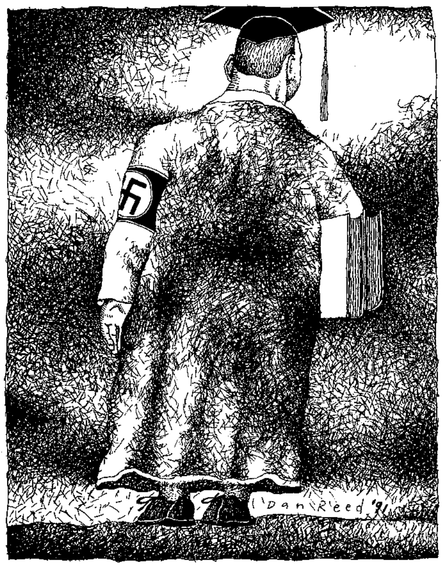
The assumptions of deconstructionists can be decapitated by a flick of the intellectual scimitar. If a "text" has no "external" referent, *means nothing*, then does the following assertion *mean anything*: "A poem has no external referent"? No, it is merely "intertextual," and certainly "refers" to no poem at all.

An enormous amount of academic energy, not to mention financial resources, is being wasted on this sort of thing, although there is a potent and gathering counter-tendency, as exemplified by Mr. Lehman's book, and by the fact that students find it all pretty boring. For the first time in a century enrollment in literature courses is down sharply. Students today are wiser than their professors.

There is yet another culturally embarrassing fact. Deconstruction had a brief vogue in Paris, but really as an intellectual plaything, a kind of literary *soufflé*. It was never really *sérieux*. The punning, playful joker Jacques Derrida must have been overwhelmed by the seriousness with which American academics studied him. Not surprisingly, most British deconstructionists and neo-Marxists are now teaching in the United States. Only in America is academic standing so determined by the sheer number of published articles. There is here a veritable Klondike of opportunity for spinning out new "approaches," and winning academic promotions.

We come now to the second part of Mr. Lehman's book, the Paul de Man scandal. This coheres with the first part in a powerful way that came as a surprise to me.

Briefly, Paul de Man, a Belgian, emigrated to the United States after the war and became a distinguished professor at Yale and a brilliant expositor of deconstruction. He became almost a cult figure because of his modesty and apparent integrity, and when he died of cancer in 1983 he was deeply mourned. But in 1987 a young scholar, an admirer of de Man, found to his horror that in occupied Belgium between 1940 and 1942 de Man had been a widely published pro-Nazi journalist, had welcomed Hitler's New Order, and was, no doubt about it, an anti-Semite.



Dan Reed

Then the *Titanic* hit a second iceberg. Not only had de Man been a Nazi and an anti-Semite, he was also a crook and a deadbeat who had abandoned his Belgian wife and children and then married, bigamously, a Bard College graduate student.

He never mentioned his past to any of his colleagues, some of whom joked, black-humorously, that he must have been suffering from "Waldheimer's disease." (My own reaction at the time was tolerant: he had tried to make a Gatsbian fresh start.) But in considering this scandal, Mr. Lehman reveals something more sinister, not so much in the mysterious Paul de Man as in his post-structuralist defenders, who used the tools of deconstruction to nullify, or pathetically attempt to nullify, what de Man himself had actually done.

If a "text" has no external "referent," they reasoned, de Man's Nazi propaganda, the text, is merely a verbal construction needing to be *contextualized*. After all, surrounding it in the collaborationist newspaper *Le Soir* were pro-Hitler articles more philistine than de Man's, and since this *vulgar* anti-Semitism was missing from his pieces, did we not have, in context, the presence of an absence? With marvelous ingenuity, the academics "showed" that de Man's pro-Hitler propaganda was actually anti-Hitler when contextualized.

It didn't work. The "referent" did exist. History was not a subjective text, and deconstruction is fated to pass away. It will be a nuisance in the academy for a while, but it need not detain us. ☐

Testing the Limits

J. O. TATE

UMBERTO ECO has earned international recognition by erecting, upon the base of his academic career as a semiotician, a variety of journalistic achievements, as well as two popular novels, *The Name of the Rose* and *Foucault's Pendulum*. His ability to communicate with diverse audiences seems to set a seal upon his profession of semiotics, to validate somehow his abstruse researches; but I think, on the contrary, that the humor and humanity evident in Mr. Eco's fiction have done much to fortify his philosophical investigations.

***The Limits of Interpretation*, by Umberto Eco (Indiana University Press, 292 pp., $27.50)**

The Limits of Interpretation, a collection of essays old and new, undertakes to correct abuses and to restrain

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Mr. Tate teaches English at Dowling College, in Oakdale, N.Y.

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excesses. Umberto Eco wants to stop "the cancer of uncontrolled interpretation," to deny the nihilism of vulgarized deconstruction, to restore at least some of the meaning of "meaning." And he aims to do so in the language of Peirce and of Derrida, probing at the fundamentals of language and logic, exploring the gap between the signifier and the signified, and filling in the void with sense that is both common and communal. Mr. Eco's 1962 work *Opera aperta* (*The Open Work*, translated into English only in 1989) advocated freedom of interpretation, the rights of readers. But now in the face of theoretical confusion and manifest nonsense, Mr. Eco must defend the rights of texts, the *intentio operis*. In other words, he writes, "A text is a place where the irreducible polysemy of symbols is in fact reduced because in a text symbols are anchored in their context." Mr. Eco distinguishes Peirce's "unlimited semiosis" from Derrida's "essential drift" by turning the latter's own interpretation of the former against him: "If Derrida assumed that his interpretation is the good one, he should also assume that Peirce's text had a *privileged meaning* to be isolated, recognized as such, and spelled out unambiguously." Mr. Eco finds a "knowledge" or "truth" in the long run of intersubjectivity, in the community of readers—that is to say, of interpreters.

> Thus, more than a parameter to use in order to validate the interpretation, the text is an object that the interpretation builds up in the course of the circular effort of validating itself on the basis of what it makes up as a result. I am not ashamed to admit that I am so defining the old and still valid "hermeneutic circle."

Why is Mr. Eco not ashamed, when his denial implies its opposite? I suggest that any tinge of embarrassment may be due to the yawning gulf between his good sense and his strained expression of it; between his human wisdom and his insistence on linguistic obscurities, abstract jargon, and pettifogging pedantries. How we long for Dr. Johnson to kick the stone, refuting Bishop Berkeley! Then we remember that, logically speaking, his place-kick was no refutation. No, Eco does better to beat the nihilists at their own game and with their own weapons. Still, his denial of "shame" at affirming what had been assented to seems a shrug at the futility of enquiry itself.

Umberto Eco's use of literary theory and linguistic pseudo-science is grounded in an awareness that shines through its offputting expression. His citation of a letter from Derrida addressed to him personally is a deft "apology of the literal sense" and establishes a "univocal discourse" emanating from the denier of any such thing. In such a stunt of mental judo we must be reminded that if *The Name of the Rose* ended in the sad reflection that we have only the name and not the rose, yet that labyrinthine novel was a vindication of humor.

In his analyses of fictional universes or small worlds, this professor doesn't neglect *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?* He is as at home with Woody Allen as he is with Laurence Sterne, and as familiar with *Dallas* and *Columbo* as he is with the hermeneutics of St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas. Although sometimes *The Limits of Interpretation* tests the limits of patience, this book discourses brilliantly on Pirandello, on Joyce, on Borges, and rewards the attention paid to it with a wealth of insight and instruction. ☐

Facts, Phenomena, and Fantasies

RICHARD RYAN

If You're So Smart: The Narrative of Economic Expertise, by Donald N. McCloskey (University of Chicago Press, 192 pp., $17.95)

LITERARY THEORY in the last half-century has managed to be remarkably influential without ever having been terribly relevant. While readers awaited a criticism they could use, the great waves of formalism, structuralism, and post-structuralism served only to wash textual studies farther out to sea. The occasional isolated pragmatist (one thinks especially of Lionel Trilling) has tried to steer literature back to port, but for the most part the critics have ranged steadily below the horizon. In the past decade, however, there has been from across the political spectrum a growing reaction to this irrelevance, and it is an important feature of Leo Strauss's legacy that conservative intellectuals can bring an active tradition to this counterrevolution in literary theory.

One enjoyable new symptom of this movement is Donald McCloskey's *If You're So Smart*, a noted economist's translation of his discipline into aesthetic terms. Thanks to the Straussians, it seems only a tad strange to find a Chicago-school free-marketeer invoking literary theory in the analysis of economic texts. Though he doesn't mention Strauss, Mr. McCloskey certainly reflects Strauss's eccentric classicism, especially in his fascination with rhetoric. The revival of classical rhetorical analysis has in fact been a chief force driving criticism back toward pragmatic concerns.

Because McCloskey detects the dynamics of persuasion throughout the interactive structures of economic thought, he is able to argue that all economics relies on rhetorical (read: political) traditions. Crunching numbers is not enough, because it is qualitative, not quantitative, behavior that is most important in determining economic courses of action. Scientists can investigate the "facts" of economic phenomena, certainly, but only when practicing "science" in the liberal, European sense of "systematic inquiry"—rather than in the current American sense of "constructing models."

When scientists begin systematically investigating how people deal with their money, Mr. McCloskey argues, they discover that we behave in ways that are better described by stories than by computer models. The obligations of a skilled scientist become very much like those of a skilled novelist. "The scientists had better devise good metaphors and tell good stories about the first three minutes of the universe or the last three months of the economy," McCloskey writes. Scientists in general—and economists in particular—had better be literary.

Their literary efforts will naturally

Mr. Ryan writes for Practical Banker *and other national publications on business, politics, and culture.*

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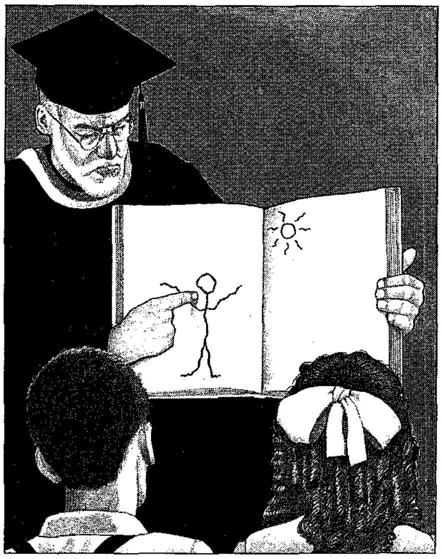
fill their work with all sorts of subjective affectations. Because "experience is overwhelmed with irrelevance," as Mr. McCloskey nicely puts it, economists from the outset must winnow the harvest of empirical data for facts and figures they arbitrarily deem important. The numbers chosen to prove economic theories are not so much necessary terms in physical equations as they are vivid symbols that convey ideas and attitudes. Economics as "an allegory of self-interest" calls on the richest possible combination of such symbols at the economists' disposal, and until they acknowledge their role in this creative process economists will not be able to answer the question that provides Mr. McCloskey's title: "If you're so smart, why aren't you rich?" For Mr. McCloskey the answer is obvious: Economics tells morally instructive stories about stock markets past, and makes up whimsically unreliable fantasies about stock markets future.

If economic texts can be appreciated for their aesthetic qualities, then it comes as no surprise that the converse holds: Literary texts have notable economic dimensions. Mr. McCloskey argues that the paradigms of eighteenth-century classical economics—paradigms of choice and scarcity underwritten by a cold-eyed naturalism—first emerged in *Robinson Crusoe*, half a century before *The Wealth of Nations*. To illustrate, McCloskey runs through an amusing set of passages in which Defoe's beleaguered hero confronts the hard realities of material limits. Crusoe tries to breed some pigeons, "but when they grew older they flew all away"; he goes fishing "but caught not one fish that [he] durst eat of." "The 'but,'" Mr. McCloskey drolly notes, "is realistic, unsentimental, aware of life's scarcity. It is the economist's favorite conjunction."

As his imaginative reading of Defoe suggests, McCloskey operates freely within an impressive field of reference: Harold Bloom on Wallace Stevens, Stephen Jay Gould on geological methodology, James MacPherson on the Civil War. Such eclecticism might easily have become annoying, but McCloskey girds himself with learning simply because the core of his argument requires that he demonstrate how rhetoric pervades every corner of the sciences. There is, in fact, very little slack in this book. *If You're So Smart* is such an agile display of scholarly reasoning—so long on horse-sense, so short on duck-feathers—that one imagines it playing the same role in the study of economics that James Watson's *The Double Helix* has played in the study of biology: as a perennial source of good-natured and deflationary skepticism.

Skepticism, that is, laced with a healthy dose of Midwestern morality.


Jon Weiman

Indeed, Mr. McCloskey wants to read economics as rhetoric because of rhetoric's unmistakably moral spin: since the days of Adam Smith and John Stuart Mill economics has drifted entirely too far from ethics for Mr. McCloskey's taste. His studies of economic history have convinced him that, given the highly subjective tenor of economic investigation, ethical reasons for choosing economic policy are every bit as sound as "scientific" invocations of aggregate demand or deficit accounting. Strange as it might seem in our post-Keynesian times, economic success (whether on a national or an individual level) seems grounded above all in unquantifiable virtues like persistence, stability, and hard work. The Germans and the Japanese, for example, are getting rich because they slave away at their jobs, save a lot of money, and keep their children in school studying boring things like math and grammar.

Americans prefer to pop in a videotape or put on the Walkman, a perfectly reasonable choice if we prefer middle-class leisure to upward mobility (which we apparently do), and in any case Mr. McCloskey is not certain that our choice is so indefensible. He is more certain that industrial-planning schemes are not likely to make nations wealthy, any more than get-rich-quick schemes are likely to make individuals millionaires. The American Question answers itself: Being smart (clever, tricky) is not a prelude to becoming rich. You need some combination of honest sweat and dumb good luck. Such conclusions, Mr. McCloskey laments, are "boring and moderate, but true." On the contrary, I find them engaging, inflammatory, and, most important in a world of rhetoric, persuasive. ☐

Causes without Rebels

BRUCE FROHNEN

IT IS DIFFICULT to be an academic "rebel" today. To demand revolution and the dismemberment of Western civilization is merely to follow the party line. To oppose either of these "truths" is to invite a visit from the thought police. Even some on the Left, such as political scientist James David Barber, have found themselves labeled "racist," "sexist," and "homophobic" for daring to question one or another modern academic dogma.

Given the dangers involved, one might laud Christopher Lasch, a prominent leftist historian, for daring to make some dangerously sensible observations. In *The True and Only Heaven*, Mr. Lasch points out that affirmative action is a program of racial reparations consented to by white professionals, who immediately handed on the burdens of forced busing and

The True and Only Heaven: Progress and Its Critics, by Christopher Lasch (Norton, 532 pp., $25)

Mr. Frohnen, a freelance writer living in Decatur, Georgia, is the author of a forthcoming book, Accepting Virtue: Burke, Tocqueville, and the Contemporary Conservative Dilemma.

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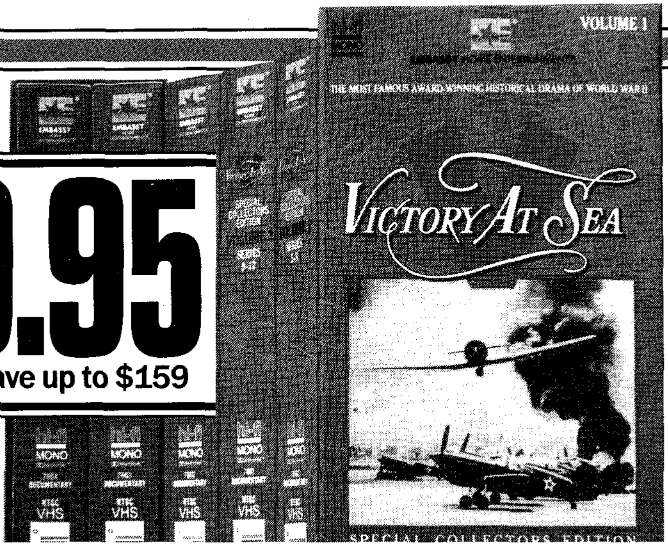

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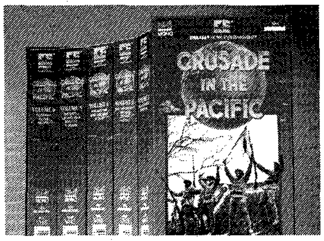

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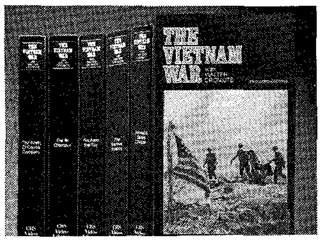

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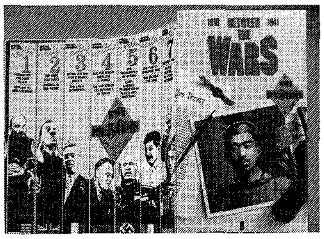

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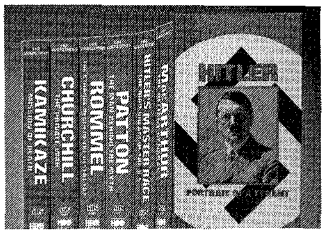

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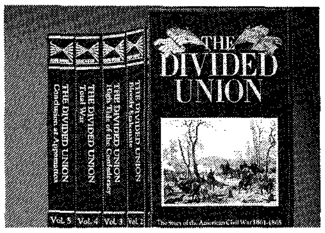

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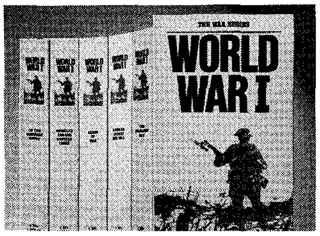

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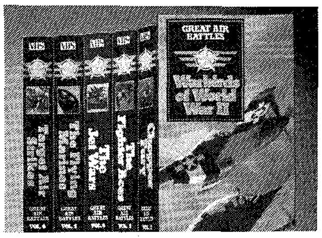

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quashed opportunity to ethnics and the poor. Mr. Lasch even argues that affirmative action is patronizing and culturally damaging to minorities themselves. He points out that many leftists (including liberals) simply do not like those for whom they claim to act; supposedly "non-judgmental" liberals label poor people "racist," "provincial," and of course "ignorant" for defending their communities against urban renewal and other social engineering schemes.

Alas, the reigning orthodoxy will survive this latest assault. But then so will Christopher Lasch. For despite his almost miraculous recognition that social engineers have succeeded only in destroying communities and individual character, Mr. Lasch retains his commitment to the central delusions that have brought the academy, and with it much of the world, pain, suffering, and confusion. "Social justice," "political action," and other key phrases of the Left remain his own, along with the "moral" goal of forcing men to be "free" by forcing them to be equal.

Most of his book is a somewhat disjointed discussion of the priests and heretics of "progress." The stated goal is to debunk "progressive" belief in the inevitable improvement of man and society. One could use either fresh insights or old truths to shed much needed light on modern man's delusion of his own success. Mr. Lasch proves remarkably adept at avoiding either transgression. Instead he dismisses Edmund Burke as a "sociologist of oblivion" for defending accepted beliefs and the life of customary affections against materialist ideology. Much more favorably received is the French syndicalist Georges Sorel's call for violent mass strikes to educate and "purify" the workers, destroy capitalism, and forge an egalitarian utopia. Mr. Lasch criticizes Marx for furthering the myth of progressive "enlightenment," freedom, and above all comfort. Yet what Mr. Lasch finds praiseworthy in movements as diverse as syndicalism and much of American populism is their opposition to the most cherished of all Marxist notions—"wage slavery."

It is his fixation on "wage slavery," along with his tiresome leftist "alternative" (the equal distribution of material goods), which keeps Mr. Lasch on the safe and beaten path of academic orthodoxy. Even his "proof" of the evils of wage slavery comes from a venerable source: the theory of "consumerism" propagated in the 1960s by the pop Marxist/psychoanalyst Herbert Marcuse. It seems capitalism—surprise—is the source of all the world's ills. Economic liberty feeds on greed. With advertising and planned obsolescence, greed chains men to a life of wage labor and material acquisition. Thus, since free men will abandon their families and communities in pursuit of material gain, Ronald Reagan's free-market policies actually undermined traditional values.

One may be excused for failing to show astonishment at the "discovery" that greed is destructive. One also may, it is hoped, be forgiven for stifling a yawn at the suggestion that "workers' control of the means of production" is the answer to the world's ills. But to blame greed on economic liberty is to ignore the central vice of modern man, especially modern intellectual man—hubris.

RANDOM NOTES

■ *Ecrasez l'infâme!* The March issue of *Vanity Fair* debuts a "writer-at-large," that Herod of American letters, Norman Mailer. In "Children of the Pied Piper: Mailer on *American Psycho*," he attempts to settle the controversy over the new novel by Bret Easton Ellis, America's literary Bluebeard ["Random Notes," Dec. 31].

First an update. After "innumerable adjustments" by editor Sonny ("I always wear black") Mehta, who caught *Psycho* on the fly after Simon & Schuster fouled out, the Ellis saga of serial killer Patrick Bateman is loose this month from Random House. Binky Urban, agent to Mr. Ellis, says her client is "totally happy" with the new version, most especially because there was "no editing whatsoever of the violence," which means the published work will be, page for page, even bloodier than the original manuscript.

"Is it," Mr. Mailer asks, "with or without art?" Art? That's the thing without which "the universe is doomed," because, the old gods (God included) being dead (asleep anyway), art is our last "link to the unknown."

Mr. Mailer is more astute when he puts aside the socio-literary eschatology. He writes of the novelist's *right* (better to call it an option) to tackle any subject, but goes further to suggest that this right involves a responsibility: if you want to wear Dostoyevsky's mantle, you'd better have broad shoulders. But, alas, "the first novel to come along in years that [tries] . . . is written by only a half-competent and narcissistic young pen."

I think he means that *American Psycho* is nihilistic enough to satisfy the spiritual (which is to say, *political*) demands of post-modern art, but fails to deliver aesthetically. False and true. True, in his attempt to monotonize greed and savagery, Mr. Ellis manages only to be boring, except when he is being offensive. (Mr. Mailer writes that the Ellis minimalism arises from "the literary conviction—self-serving in those of limited talent—that there must not be one false note. In consequence, there are often not enough notes.") But the dark Ellis cry against the Eighties is false. Mr. Mailer believes the boy has succeeded and shows "older authors where the hands have come to on the clock." In fact, the Ellis reach falls short of his grasp.

The colorful tooter of Mr. Mailer's title is Mr. Reagan, under whose "hornpipe wheezes" the "political air turned flatulent," and "unbridled manipulations" were tolerated that produced "wholly aimless lives for a generation of Wall Street yuppies." Mr. Ellis may have failed to create a credible psychopath, but can anyone doubt that "there might be a crew of Patrick Batemans at large in New York right now"?

Mr. Mailer out-Voltaires Voltaire: "The good is the enemy of the great, and good taste is certainly the most entrenched foe of literature." I've heard it said that quality is a meaningless concept, and that art's only attractive features are its originality and belligerence. The artist is not creator but destroyer: Crush the infamous thing! Mr. Mailer endorses the assault on political convention, but he'll get no sympathy from art's avant garde. His pettifogging about the Ellis technique shows that the Mailer literary ethos is entirely traditional. —BRAD MINER

Progressives have replaced faith in God and the traditional wisdom that formerly checked man's natural greed with faith in man's own supposedly God-like power to build Heaven on Earth. Mr. Lasch seems confident that his own "modest" blueprint is self-evidently good: "The need for a more equitable distribution of wealth ought to be obvious, both on moral and on economic grounds, and it ought to be equally obvious that economic equality cannot be achieved under an advanced system of capitalist production."

Is this not the road to serfdom? Mr. Lasch would remake the world—finally getting it right, of course. He would establish egalitarian materialism because "social justice" (and the latest trendy academic delusion, the "imminent" environmental breakdown being caused by the existence of too much industry and too many human beings) requires it. Only a society of small-scale producers, he argues, can foster community and virtue. And only radical political action can achieve and maintain such a society. Mr. Lasch openly states that a "just" egalitarian materialism would bring poverty and not wealth. But this "bold" recognition constitutes nothing more than the abandonment of a lie made embarrassingly obvious everywhere socialism has been instituted.

Mr. Lasch remains blissfully unaware that the very values he claims to hold dear have already been "victimized" by the means he prescribes for their rebirth. His syndicalist heroes sought to eliminate the very intervening institutions—voluntary social and economic associations in particular—on which well-ordered liberty and any virtuous life necessarily rest. But he cannot conceive the notion that men can act virtuously (or freely) if they do not act politically.

Conservatism is "irrational" because it recognizes that men act best when they act outside the realm of politics. But it is through political action that common feeling is subordinated to interest (be it economic or egocentric) and that the question of how best to repair and maintain the social fabric is reduced to degrading questions of how best to distribute material goods.

This work begins with a powerful quotation from Nathaniel Hawthorne lamenting man's habit of mistaking the charms of the sensual world for the true and only heaven. Perhaps Mr. Lasch should read the passage again —a bit more carefully this time. ☐

Rothschild's Law

TUCKER GOODRICH

"A market economy is not the invention of capitalism, it is the invention of civilization. It has existed for centuries."
—Mikhail Gorbachev

MICHAEL Rothschild opens his book with this statement, and then sets out to refute it. Rothschild claims that capitalism has, essentially, always existed, that it is the result of biological laws as immutable as Newton's laws. His contention is not just that capitalism is the most desirable form of human organization, but that it is inevitable.

His argument is similar to those advanced by Locke in defense of Natural Law, but instead of resting his case on revelation, Rothschild bases it on modern biological science, particularly on an updated version of Darwin's theory of evolution. Technology, he contends, evolves in the same pattern found in the evolution of organisms. Specifically, Rothschild believes that written information serves the same function for technology as DNA and sexual reproduction do for life. Before sexual reproduction, only the simplest forms of life could exist. Only when communication between the DNAs of

Bionomics: The Inevitability of Capitalism, by Michael Rothschild (Henry Holt, 420 pp., $24.95)

Mr. Goodrich is a freelance writer living in New York.

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members of the same species became possible through sexual reproduction were truly complex species able to evolve, each individual drawing upon the knowledge of survival contained in the genes of his predecessors. Similarly, Rothschild notes, written forms of communication allow for efficient communication between human beings, thus spurring the rapid spread of technology.

Advances in technology had previously come with changes in the species. The stone-tool technology of *Homo habilis* remained constant, as did the species, until it was replaced by *Homo erectus*, who, along with a larger brain, had more advanced tools. Only when written communication was developed did the advancement of technology diverge from the evolution of the species. This allowed *Homo sapiens* to develop technology faster than the species' evolution progressed.

Rothschild gives several examples of the parallel evolution of technology and biology, the most interesting of which is his discussion of *Bumblebee Economics*, a book by zoologist Bernd Heinrich. Heinrich discovered that bumblebees must gather enough energy to allow the hive's genetic information to survive. If the bees don't make an energy "profit," the hive goes bankrupt, and the information is lost. Rothschild, consulting with Heinrich, wrote a balance sheet for the hive, using calories as the unit of currency. The analogy to a business is exact, right down to the "learning curve." Bumblebees aren't born knowing how to gather nectar from a flower; they must be taught. And just as training new workers is one of the most expensive things a business can do, so is it expensive in terms of energy expended for the hive to have young bees gathering nectar. The young bees are inefficient, but they learn quickly.

Actually, the learning–efficiency relationship can be described mathematically on a double-log graph: With every doubling of experience, the amount of labor required drops by 10 to 30 per cent. In the Eighties, for instance, 60 per cent of steel-worker jobs disappeared, but the level of production remained the same. New technology was applied to steel making, and the pent-up effects of the learning curve were released. It's true here, and it's true with young bumblebees. In fact, writes Rothschild, "no study has ever identified a product or service whose costs did not decline with accumulating experience."

This provides Rothschild with the ammunition for his attack on liberal economics. When one puts the learning curve into the equation, it becomes perfectly reasonable that the zero-sum game envisioned by Malthus and championed by Keynes could nevertheless provide a steadily growing supply of goods. The equation of guns and butter only means something if production always takes the same amount of labor. Examining the learning curve, however, we see it is perfectly reasonable to expect the production of *both* guns and butter to

RIGHT BOOKS

■ Paul Zane Pilzer wants people to look at wealth in an entirely new way. Business is no longer a zero-sum game, he says, it's a world of unlimited resources, of unlimited wealth. One person's benefit is no longer another's loss.

In *Unlimited Wealth: The Theory and Practice of Economic Alchemy* (Crown, 226 pp., $19.95), Mr. Pilzer explains how today's billionaires will not earn their bucks by making an existing product cheaper and more easily available—as Henry Ford did with the automobile. Rather they'll create their wealth by producing goods and services that did not exist at the time of their birth—e.g., Sam Walton with automated distribution, Ross Perot with data processing, Steve Jobs with personal computers.

Mr. Pilzer applies this "market has no corners" theory to many of the nation's ailments. Allow parents to choose which school their child will attend, and educators will be forced to provide cheaper, more efficient, more up-to-date methods of teaching. The voucher argument, essentially.

The same applies to child care: Parents choose where their child will be watched; government pays the bill. Meanwhile, Mom and Dad can work, creating more goods and wealth. As with education, Mr. Pilzer argues, the relatively small sums spent on the very young are more than redeemed later in the beneficiary's life when he becomes a productive member of society.

Which all sounds dandy indeed. But by the time you've arrived at the first line of the last chapter—"Let's review the theory of Alchemy . . ."—you begin to envy Sisyphus. Over and over he repeats his chorus: It's no longer a zero-sum game, the world has unlimited resources, the future grows ever brighter, and so on. It's not that what Mr. Pilzer says is wrong. The problem lies in his failure to go beyond the obvious and apply his ideas in more concrete terms.

To take just one of many intricacies Mr. Pilzer could have dealt with more thoroughly, consider the voucher proposal. Public schools spend about twice as much as parochial schools per student. One can therefore infer that because public schools have a monopoly on state and federal funds, they are not naturally inclined to be as efficient as private schools, which must continue to perform well so that students continue to enroll.

But an annual expenditure of, say, $5,000 per pupil in public schools is an average of aggregate spending. That is, if it costs a certain public school $5 million a year to educate one thousand students, the average cost per student is $5,000. But if fifty of those students are drawn away to a better school under a voucher plan, the public school will not spend $250,000 ($5,000 for each of the departing fifty students) less annually. It will continue to spend close to the $5 million, because of the fixed bureaucratic overhead, money not spent in the classroom.

In order for the cost of vouchers to be not simply added to the nation's educational expenditures, a voucher system cannot effectively exist *along with* public schools—that is, schools *run* by the state. A working voucher system would entail the private sector's running all the schools and the state's supplying the funds. The voucher is a great idea, which would give the education establishment a real incentive to care more about teaching and less about political infighting, but it would wind up costing more money.

Mr. Pilzer has a good theory that has implicitly become part of modern economic thinking, and he felt explication was in order. It still is.

—GEOFFREY MORRIS

expand—a thoroughly tested refutation of Malthusian economics.

Rothschild holds that economics, with the exception of Adam Smith's, is based upon the Newtonian view of the world—world as machine. Hence the charts and formulas of the econometrician. Rothschild's bionomics, and Smith's own theory, view the world as an organism, not suited to "fine tuning" or "pump priming." The economy needs "natural liberty," in Smith's words, to succeed.

Rothschild would have us ignore the wisdom of the Keynesians, for he feels it is totally misdirected. In support of this position, he quotes Naohiro Amaya, formerly head of MITI: "We did the opposite of what American [Keynesian] economists said. We violated all the traditional economic concepts." Meanwhile, the U.S. followed the ideas of the man who kept us in the Great Depression for ten years.

Somewhat reluctantly, Rothschild takes an extremely conservative position. By arguing that capitalism is the same system as that which organizes the rest of nature (convincingly—unless you are a Fundamentalist, in which case you won't like this book) he clearly alienates the Left. He also spends a section comparing governments to parasites. The argument grinds on to an inexorably libertarian conclusion: that the economy should be left on its own. Just as man could not be expected to organize a rain forest, so too he cannot be expected to organize an economy.

The problem is that Rothschild has never heard of the conservative arguments that parallel his. He admires Adam Smith, and notes that his economics come closest to bionomics. One just wishes Rothschild had heard of Austrian economics before writing the book, for his ideas support many of the arguments the Austrian economists have been making for years, albeit from a completely new direction. But because he hadn't, he fence-sits between the Left and the Right.

Rothschild writes:

> If one accepts the bionomic viewpoint, the result of the great cold-war economic experiment is hardly surprising. Socialism collapsed because it is a policy of unrestrained economic intervention. It tries to fix what is "wrong" with the spontaneous, self-organizing phenomenon called capitalism. But, of course, a natural process cannot be "fixed." A natural process cannot be right or wrong. A natural process has no moral character. Like it or not, nature just happens. No one argues whether leaves should be green. Leaves *are* green. We accept this fact and make the best of it.

Rothschild is no moderate, as he would have us believe, but he has written a useful, provocative book. ☐

FILM

A Couple of Contenders

JOHN SIMON

EUROPEAN film has traditionally been the thing we could turn to when American movies became, as they often did, too frivolous or empty for anybody's good. But now that most American movies are worse than ever, hang it if the films from Europe do not manage to be as trivial as our own. There are, however, some fortunate exceptions.

The Nasty Girl, a film from Germany (submitted for an Academy Award and, if anyone cares about that dubious honor, a strong contender), is based on—or, as they would pretentiously say in Hollywood, "upon"—a true story. The real-life tale is that of Anja Rosmus, a young Bavarian woman from Passau, whom conditions in her town spurred on to become a respected historian of what happened under the Nazis. Like Anja, the movie's Sonja begins as a carefree but intellectually curious girl who, having won one international high-school essay competition, tries again the following year. This time the assigned topic is "My Home Town during the Third Reich."

Sonja, who opens the film acting as cicerone to a television crew—and to us in the audience—is shown posed against or perched on the most picturesque locations in Pfilzing (as Passau has been fictionalized), and we are

---

Mr. Simon, NR's film critic, is also theater critic for New York *magazine.*

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lulled into assuming that this will be a witty fashion-layout type of film about a quaintly photogenic town and its quaint, telegenic little people. And, true enough, there is comedy aplenty in the early sequences of the movie, written and directed by Michael Verhoeven, a German director not to be confused with the Dutchman Paul Verhoeven, who made *Robocop* and such. Indeed, so skillful is the workmanship that the comedy never stops even after the film has become scary.

For as Sonja starts rummaging in the town library and elsewhere in pursuit of the past, bureaucratic roadblocks and personal hostilities are thrown at her in funny, exasperating, and finally sinister ways. But her stubborn courage will not be deterred even after a vicious and life-threatening campaign is launched against her, her family, and even household pets. For by this time Sonja has married her (and everybody else's) favorite schoolteacher and become a mother herself. Yet with heroic mulishness or foolish temerity she pushes on.

I am a trifle regretful that Verhoeven feels obliged to Brechtianize and introduce alienation effects. That he sometimes uses outdoor photomurals for indoor backgrounds doesn't bother me; but to have Sonja's room during a family council turn into a sort of ferris-wheel gondola whirling about against a Pfilzing cityscape strikes me as excessive. Alienation effects work better on stage, a slightly artificial medium that adapts more readily to the studied, the deliberate; on film, which is by nature realistic, such devices work only if the style is anti-realistic throughout—but in that case what need is there for alienation effects in the first place?

This, however, is almost nitpicking. The marvelous thing about *The Nasty Girl* (*Das schreckliche Mädchen*, by the way, should have been translated as *The Dreadful Girl*, which makes quite a difference) is that it so smoothly functions as both everyday story and cautionary parable. Aside from dialogue so pointed that it handily survives even subtitling, as well as fine direction, there is also splendid casting and acting, beginning with Lena Stolze as Sonja. Miss Stolze is equally believable as a spirited schoolgirl, a sexy woman, a noble but quixotic heroine, a canny strategist and tactician in knight errant's armor. Besides her great acting talent, she has a kind of looks that are ordinary yet enchanting, never movie-starrish yet nowise resistible.

The supporting cast is equally flawless, with Robert Giggenbach, as the devoted husband who nevertheless abandons Sonja, and Michael Gahr, as her father, especially noteworthy. But no less good, really, are all the townspeople—by no means all black or all white—who glibly reverse themselves about Sonja—for, against, for, against again—as the winds of opportunism are blowing, until her equally intransigent granny remains her sole ally.

The film is beautifully shot in color (the present) and monochrome (the past) by Axel de Roche; but even more arresting is its tempo. When you look carefully at a fully accomplished film such as *GoodFellas* or *The Nasty Girl*, you notice its supreme virtue: a generally fast tempo that is not afraid of either speeding up even further or slowing down to the point of seemingly dawdling, whatever best serves the narrative or psychological needs—so that rhythm actually becomes content. And all this inconspicuously, without calling smug attention to itself.

Alan Nahigian

■ What a thoroughly absorbing film Gianni Amelio has co-adapted and directed from a novel by the late great Leonardo Sciascia, ***Open Doors***! This time, unlike in other Sciascia works, the Sicilian locale does not involve the Mafia but something worse: Mussolini's Fascists in 1937, adjudicating a triple murder that seems to have some vaguely political motivation. Sanna, the president of the court, is not a bad fellow, but he goes along with the Fascists, and since the killer, Scalia (Ennio Fantastichini, and fine), is only too proudly eager for the death sentence, what's holding up the show?

What's holding it up is one conscientious judge, Di Francesco, and one thoughtful juror, Consolo, a highly literate farmer. Both of them basically oppose the death penalty, and both of them perceive Scalia's killing of his superior, of his successor to the humble bureaucratic job he was fired from, and of his wife as something not quite ordinary but covering up bigger and fouler things. What is remarkable about this film is that it is almost entirely a character study of both the major and the minor personages. Old and young, adults and children, good people with flaws, bad people with patches of virtue, peripheral figures barely glimpsed—all contribute something to a story told so elliptically that it makes serious demands on the viewer, but also offers abundant rewards. Dostoyevsky figures in the film, too, and rightly so: *Open Doors* is Dostoyevskian—no small compliment.

Next to character, there is atmosphere, searchingly brought out in Tonino Nardi's unflamboyant cinematography of Palermo and environs, with many long and extreme long shots, where backgrounds are calibrated to enhance the soul of the story; Franco Piersanti's restrained musical underscoring likewise contributes incisively. But the ultimate glory of the film is Gian Maria Volontè's Judge Di Francesco. Playing a widower considerably older than he is, Volontè, famous for his violent or trenchant roles, proves equally superb as an introspective, hunched-up-on-himself character —note especially how he eats. This is not one of your simple, radiantly good men—Consolo, the juror played sensitively by Renato Carpentieri, is that—but one capable of outbursts, albeit more implosive than explosive. Volontè may be the greatest leading man *cum* character actor in movies now that Olivier is gone: he gives off shudders of concentration that are spine-tingling in the *positive* sense.

Amelio's film is really a philosophical combat between conflicting ideologies. Chief Judge Sanna declares, "I don't like zealous people. They are capable of breaking a priceless vase to kill a fly." Sanna, a half-hearted fellow-traveler and amateur conchologist, wants to play it easy; but what if the vase is an overinflated piece of Fascist art, and the fly the carrier of a major disease? A high Fascist observer from Rome goes further: he would like a magic ring that could make troublemakers disappear. Failing that, he'll settle for speedy executions: the good peace-loving citizens ought to sleep safe behind open doors. Di Francesco answers soberly, wearily: "I always keep my front door locked." He is not an idealistic zealot; he merely believes in reckoning with human frailty.

How this conflict works itself out is the subtext of Amelio's calmly unsettling film, another Oscar nominee. What the two decent men, Di Francesco and Consolo, achieve may go for naught; or it may be that the uprooted vine of goodness can, fragmented, retain a foothold from which to sprout, surprisingly, anew, as the farmer says from experience.

On the Richter scale on which our movies are foolishly measured, *Open Doors* may be only a four; but on the scale of human content, this Sciascia–Amelio–Volontè teamwork rates something more like a ten. □

THEATER

Prelude to a Movie

EVA RESNIKOVA

WITH Broadway increasingly becoming the domain of the musical, audiences thirsting for serious drama find themselves turning to the off-Broadway stage. And if there is one theme that appears to be preoccupying off-Broadway playwrights at present, it is, to invoke the cliché—and one of them does—the healing power of love.

To a remarkable degree, these pleas in behalf of love involve the kind that once dared not speak its name. This theme can be traced back to last season's *Prelude to a Kiss*, by Craig Lucas, which transferred to Broadway, where it is still running, and, even earlier, to the previous season's *Eastern Standard*, by Richard Greenberg. Also included under this rubric are three plays from the current season: the big off-Broadway hit *The Sum of Us*, by David Stevens, and the more critically contested, and since closed, *Love Diatribe*, by Harry Kondoleon, and *The American Plan*, by Mr. Greenberg.

The homosexual content in these plays ranges from the most unabashed to the most covert. In the former category is ***The Sum of Us***, the protagonist of which is a highly sympathetic and attractive young gay man whose search for love is ironically thwarted by the clumsily overenthusiastic supportiveness of his well-meaning father. This is the first work for the stage from Mr. Stevens, who is best known as the author of the screenplay for *Breaker Morant*. The prime exemplar of the latter category, ***Prelude to a Kiss***, is also the most commercially successful of all these plays. Mr. Lucas is a well-regarded off-Broadway playwright and the author of the screenplay for *Longtime Companion*, a film about the devastation wrought by the AIDS epidemic among a group of socially privileged young gay men.

Homosexuality and AIDS are never mentioned in *Prelude*, but the plot can be, and has been, read as a metaphor for the gay man who must face the physical deterioration and impending death of a young and formerly attractive lover. In the play, an Old Man who wanders into the suburban backyard wedding of Peter and Rita insists on kissing the bride. Rita begins to act strangely, and eventually Peter realizes that the decrepit Old Man has switched souls with the young and beautiful Rita. Peter eventually abandons the-body-of-Rita-with-the-Old-Man's-soul to cohabit with and love the body-of-the-Old-Man-with-Rita's-soul—which body is, moreover, dying of cancer.

Somewhere between the kitchen-sink realism of *The Sum of Us* and the fairy tale of *Prelude to a Kiss* lies ***Love Diatribe***, which zanily partakes of both the former's sentimental family drama and the latter's metaphor and element of the supernatural. The setting is a suburban home to which the adult daughter and son of the family

---

Miss Resnikova reviews theater for NR *and dance for* The New Criterion.

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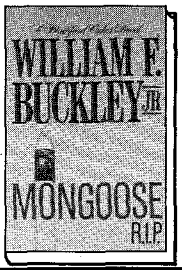

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have returned, much to their parents' horror, in flight from failed relationships. In his previous play, *Zero Positive*, Mr. Kondoleon dealt directly with the AIDS epidemic. *Love Diatribe* ostensibly deals with heterosexual relationships, but homosexuality and AIDS are constant presences, both through a neighbor whose son was an early victim of the disease, and who remains convinced that his son would not have died had the neighborhood children treated him more kindly, and, metaphorically, through the "diatribe" of the title, a heated call for love in the face of death.

Though we are obviously not meant to take at face value a statement like "If you don't love someone sufficiently, you end up killing them," we are meant to take seriously its implications as it relates to AIDS. It is Mr. Kondoleon who wrote the line about "the healing power of love"; he gets away with it—or tries to—by putting it into the mouth of Frieda, a magic-ring-and-potion-bearing *dea ex machina* in the form of a young woman who shows up on their doorstep claiming to be a German exchange student. ("I say it with an accent so it doesn't sound hokey," she announces brightly.)

The American Plan deals directly with homosexuality, but it neither mentions nor alludes to AIDS, as the play takes place mostly in 1960, when the problems facing homosexuals were likely to be coming to terms with their sexuality and finding ways to lead double lives. Nick Lockridge seems to have all the trappings of a nice young man—quite possibly the one who can, despite their widely differing backgrounds, rescue the emotionally deprived Lili Adler from the clutches of her manipulative mother. By the end of the first act, Nick and Lili have fallen in love and are planning to marry. In the second act, Gil Harbison, a similarly clean-cut young man, suddenly shows up. The moment the two men are alone together, Gil plants a big kiss smack on the lips of Nick—a kiss that turns the play as abruptly as the one in *Prelude*.

And, it turns out, to the same end: the immediate shift of focus away from the hero's relationship with his bride/fiancée and toward his relationship with a beloved male. In each instance, one can practically hear the sigh of relief as the playwright is free finally to pursue his real interests. It is surely telling that in both plays, the male–male relationships are far more rich, complex, and emotionally compelling than the male–female ones. The moment in *Prelude* when Peter recognizes his lost love in the Old Man and kisses him tenderly is the emotional—and erotic—high point of the play, far more so than any of the earlier scenes, in which his love interest is more conventionally packaged, or the oddly flat final scene, when Rita is restored to him in all her feminine splendor.

This is not to suggest an inherent lack of negative capability on the part of playwrights interested in exploring homosexual relationships. *The Sum of Us* rings true emotionally, as did another recent play dealing with homosexual relationships, Terrence McNally's *Lisbon Traviata*. But despite the dramaturgical shortcomings of both these plays—*The Sum of Us* suffers from sentimentality and *The Lisbon Traviata* had severe second-act problems—Mr. Stevens and Mr. McNally attain in them an emotional truth that transcends the specific situations of their characters. (In the days when homosexuality could not be openly portrayed on stage, Tennessee Williams accomplished the same sort of emotional transcendence in reverse.)

But works that deal so specifically with homosexuality, no matter how genuine their emotions, are unlikely to be the object of a Hollywood bidding war and result in a seven-figure movie sale, as was *Prelude to a Kiss*. This unusually large purchase price partly reflects the participation of the movie star Alec Baldwin, who created the role of Peter off-Broadway and will be reprising it in the film, with Alec Guinness as the Old Man.

The film sale occurred before *Ghost* proved the most successful movie of 1990; obviously, the transmigration of souls is in the Zeitgeist. One recalls especially the scene in *Ghost* in which Whoopi Goldberg agrees to allow the spirit of Patrick Swayze to inhabit her body so that he and Demi Moore can make love one last time. We see Miss Goldberg's hand coming to rest tenderly on Miss Moore's, but the filmmakers do not follow through: in the lovemaking scenes that follow, Miss Goldberg's body is replaced with Mr. Swayze's. One is eager to discover how Hollywood will handle the analogous encounter between the two Alecs. ☐

TRANS-O-GRAM / Kem Putney

1 E	2 P		3 D	4 Y	5 C	6 K	7 A	8 N	9 X		10 H	11 G	12 Q	13 U	14 F		15 I	16 R	17 J	18 B	19 L
20 S	21 W		22 T	23 E	24 X	25 C	26 A	27 F	28 N	29 B		30 L	31 K	32 J	33 D	34 U	35 G	36 H	37 Z	38 Q	39 P
	40 R	41 C	42 E	43 O	44 L	45 S	46 F	47 B	48 G	49 V		50 M	51 Y		52 A	53 D	54 C	55 P	56 Z	57 O	
58 B	59 F	60 H	61 L	62 N	63 J	64 Q		65 I	66 E	67 A	68 K	69 D	70 M	71 R	72 G	73 W	74 Z		75 J	76 F	
77 B	78 D	79 I		80 Q	81 S	82 H	83 C		84 A	85 P	86 J		87 E	88 B	89 H		90 N	91 U	92 X	93 Z	94 F
95 K	96 I	97 A	98 O		99 D	100G	101W	102E	103L	104R	105F		106T	107Y	108K	109S	110V	111M	112U	113P	114G
115O		116J	117C	118L	119H	120B	121Y	122D	123T	124Z		125W	126S	127N	128R	129K	130H	131J	132A		133M
134D	135C	136P	137J		138I	139H		140C	141Z	142P	143L	144I		145E	146F	147O	148A	149R	150N		151S
152I	153L	154A	155C	156E	157J	158R	159F	160D		161U	162T		163K	164Y	165R	166Q	167L	168V		169T	170F
171X		172O	173K	174B	175Q	176G	177J	178W		179M	180Q	181Y		182B	183U	184S		185I	186B	187Z	
188K	189W	190X	191H		192N	193H	194V	195K	196J	197F	198P	199G		200D	201N	202E	203A	204P	205I	206X	

DEFINITIONS

A.	Decision time—on the highway of life	26 154 203 132 97 52 7 84 148 67
B.	Sea-goer's knot (2 words)	186 120 29 174 18 47 77 58 88
C.	Divine forgiveness	140 182 117 155 54 135 83 25 5 41
D.	Member of Teddy's cavalry (2 words)	200 134 53 99 78 69 122 160 3 33
E.	Nazi air force	145 156 202 87 102 1 42 23 66
F.	Piano's key number (hyph.)	159 59 105 170 46 76 146 27 14 94
G.	Venomous arachnid of the Southwest	176 199 72 100 35 114 11 48 197
H.	Confederate general (1821–1904)	119 193 139 10 82 191 60 130 89 36
I.	Increased	138 152 144 205 96 15 185 79 65
J.	Vila is its capital (2 words)	157 177 17 137 196 75 32 116 86 63 131
K.	Use	173 195 108 129 31 163 188 68 6 95
L.	Hotel employee	61 118 143 30 103 167 153 44 19
M.	Friendship	179 111 50 70 133
N.	Get the planes in the air!	127 192 150 28 8 90 62 201
O.	No joke, in the theater	98 172 147 57 43 115
P.	Hollywood canine (3 words)	204 142 85 136 198 2 113 55 39
Q.	Legislation covering many items	38 166 180 12 80 175 64
R.	Fostering rebellion	165 149 158 40 128 71 16 104
S.	Haven for the homeless	151 45 126 109 184 81 20
T.	Good nickname for a carpenter	169 123 22 106 162
U.	Alabama institution of higher learning	112 183 161 34 91 13
V.	Seasonal quaffs	168 110 49 194
W.	Oklahoman	178 101 189 73 21 125
X.	Harden, as bones	171 190 206 92 24 9
Y.	Fine point	51 107 4 164 121 181
Z.	Popular Chinese root	141 37 124 74 187 56 93

DIRECTIONS

The object of TRANS-O-GRAM is to fill in the puzzle diagram by guessing the words from their definitions, and transferring each letter of the guessed word to the correspondingly numbered square in the diagram. When the diagram is filled in it will spell out a quotation from some published work (reading normally from left to right, black boxes indicating the ends of words); also, when the words have all been filled in above, their initial letters will spell out the author and title of the quoted work. The acrostic feature, and the relative word-lengths in the diagram, will assist in the solution. Spelling and definitions on the authority of *Webster's New International Dictionary*, Second Edition.

See page 68 for solution to last Trans-O-Gram.

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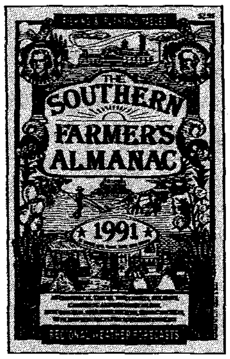

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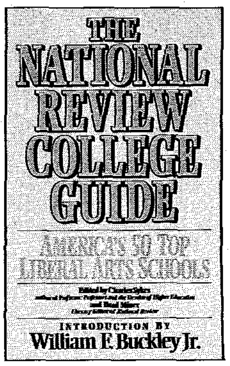


ON THE RIGHT / Wm. F. Buckley Jr.

To Look After Our Intelligence

NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 11

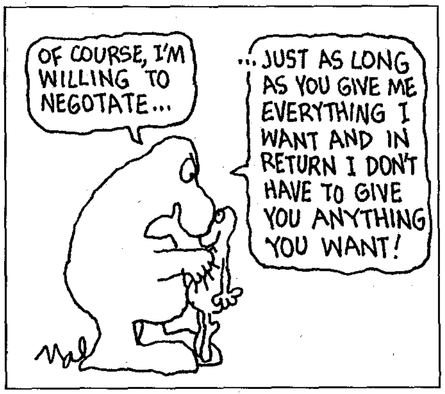
For many years after the late Senator Frank Church, with the cooperation of former CIA Director William Colby, made a foreign-aid program out of American secrets, it was an open scandal that intelligence agencies in Great Britain and France simply declined to cooperate with the U.S. on important matters. Why? Because they did not wish to risk their own assets by letting the CIA, whose secret information, post-Church, was available to as many as 36 U.S. legislators, have knowledge of them. In such situations one can never know how much damage resulted, how many Americans were blackmailed, maimed, or killed, by Communist agents who were not foiled because vital information leaked to them.

One day there will be a definitive history of Allied intelligence operations in the postwar era. We may find, for instance, what has been publicly charged by responsible analysts in Great Britain that the top MI-6 agent in charge of detecting Communist subversion in Great Britain was himself a Communist agent. Posthumous revelations by Nikita Khrushchev confirm the damage done by Alger Hiss and his successors. One clear beneficiary of these revelations will be Senator Joe McCarthy. It never crossed his mind, when he railed about institutional disloyalty, how bad it really was.

Now we have House Speaker Tom Foley setting up the new slate in the House Intelligence Committee, which is supposed to recommend appropriate intelligence policy and to pass on covert operations. Among those designated for membership in the House committee is Ron Dellums (D., Calif.). His appointment is the equivalent of naming Vito Marcantonio of New York, back in 1948, to a legislative committee to organize anti-Communist operations.

Ron Dellums has in almost every situation taken the anti-anti-Communist position. If our military had depended only on Mr. Dellums's votes, we would be fighting in the Gulf with biplanes and Gatling guns. Here is a measure of Mr. Dellums's sympathies. After the invasion of Grenada in 1983, correspondence lifted from the headquarters of the Communist overlord Maurice Bishop was inspected. And a letter turned up the publication of which would have resulted in Ron Dellums's being chased out of his constituency with wet towels, except that he represents the People's Republic of Berkeley. The most spectacular letter was written by Dellums's aide and confidante Carlottia Scott directly to strongman Maurice Bishop. "My Dearest," the letter from an aide to an American legislator, addressed to a Communist agent began, "Ron, as a political thinker, is the best around and Fidel will verify that in no uncertain terms." Wonderful: If you doubt we're on your side, ask Fidel Castro and he will reassure you. "When matched against the best of them, Ron always comes out ahead (even with Fidel) . . . Ron is really hooked on you and Grenada"—i.e., the attempted Communization of Grenada—"and doesn't want anything to happen to building the revolution and making it strong. He really admires you as a person and even more so as a leader with courage and foresight, principle and integrity. Believe me, he doesn't make that kind of statement often about anyone." Indeed. He probably wouldn't make it about George Washington. "The only other person that I know of that he expresses such admiration for is Fidel."

Now my first temptation on reading this letter eight years ago was to imagine that it was a plant by Carlottia who had been spurned by Ron. But weeks and months went by and there was no serious disavowal of it. So we see that the situation today calls for a man who admires Fidel Castro more than anyone in public life to survey American secrets, and cast his vote to authorize or not secret intelligence operations, which deal in such matters as whether this war is likely to break out, that nation is accumulating nuclear power, or that airplane is likely to blow up in the air.


OF COURSE, I'M WILLING TO NEGOTATE...
...JUST AS LONG AS YOU GIVE ME EVERYTHING I WANT AND IN RETURN I DON'T HAVE TO GIVE YOU ANYTHING YOU WANT!
Mal

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Some years ago, Congressman Michael Harrington, sitting in the same committee, leaked a vital secret to the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*. He explained that it didn't matter that it was secret, he thought the people had a right to know. Mr. Dellums may not believe the people have a right to know, but one gathers he believes Fidel Castro has a right to know. ☐

Who's Right On Arnett?

NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 15

The quarrel over Peter Arnett of CNN isn't one that quickly separates the sophisticated from the booboisie. The True Believers in all but total press freedom advance as their clinching argument that it is useful to know even what it is that the enemy wishes us to think, because in that way we learn something that may prove valuable. The point is tenable in pure epistemological theory (the more you know, the more you know), but in the real world a pretty good argument can be made against expediting the telling of untruths.

Five or six years ago in the heat of the cold war I was a guest on Ted Koppel's *Nightline*, the other guest a Soviet "journalist" practicing in Washington. I put journalist inside quotation marks because in those days there was never such a thing as a Soviet journalist. There were Soviet propagandists—men and women instructed to tell the American people whatever the Kremlin desired them to be told, which was uniformly tendentious. The subject Mr. Koppel had invited us to address was, "What do the Russian people think of?"—XYZ. I said that before discussing that subject I wanted to know why Mr. Propagandavich had been invited on the program, because his job was to lie to the American people about what the Russian people thought about anything at all. Besides, I said, there is no systematic apparatus permitted within the Soviet Union for finding out what the Russian people care about because what they care about is of no interest to their slave-masters. There was a huge response to the position I took, as Mr. Koppel conceded, though he continued, right through Berlin Wall time, inviting Soviet propaganda machines on his program.

Now the free-speech purists will argue that there is nothing wrong there, because somebody is on the spot to rebut what you say. To which the best answer is that if we spend the whole of every day considering every question to be an open question, we have taken the position that learning is essentially an impossible process because we have no foundation to build upon. If every day during the reign of Hitler one had to reestablish that he was anti-Semitic because someone had said he wasn't, you would never get around to formulating a strategy to cope with his anti-Semitism.

And that takes us to the Peter Arnett problem. Do we or do we not know that the United States and our allies are taking considerable precautions to spare the civilian population of Iraq to the extent this is possible? Answer: Yes. Why? Because we are told it by people we trust, because even by Iraqi showings, enemy civilian casualties have been relatively light, and because if we really didn't care about civilian casualties, we could end the war by noon tomorrow by very simply nuclearizing Baghdad, which gives us an insight into U.S. priorities.

But here is Mr. Arnett, retailing the Iraqi line that we are hitting innocent civilians day after day intentionally. How can we know that he knows that he is retailing Iraqi lies, in return for permission to continue broadcasting? Harrison Salisbury, back in the Fifties, received a Pulitzer Prize for his reporting from Moscow, which reporting—he volunteered some time later—was often misleading and untruthful because that was the price of doing business in the Soviet Union. When Commander Lloyd Bucher and his team were caught and tortured by the North Koreans and were told to pose before a camera, testifying that they had not been mistreated, Commander Bucher passed around the word that when the camera shot the picture, they were all to raise their middle finger and point it heavenward, the good old fica sign for Up Yours. The North Koreans had been told by the commander that this symbol meant give my love to mother. When the North Koreans discovered its true meaning, they submitted the Americans to more torture.

Well, you can't expect Mr. Arnett to pose with his middle finger up during his broadcasts, now can you? It is simply true that a number of people will believe that we are conducting ourselves inhumanely. These misconceptions should not be taken lightly. The distinguished British historian Alistair Horne wrote recently, "Britain's 'secret weapon' in the Falklands may have been her ability to impose total censorship on all those frustrated journalists, cooped up under the hatches of the *Canberra*. I've often wondered whether, given Vietnam-style TV coverage on the Normandy beaches in 1944, there would ever have been a D-Day + 1." So . . . don't sell the anti-Arnett case too short. □

Stop the USSR Now

NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 18

The Soviet Union, under the leadership of who-the-hell-knows, is getting into the Gulf act, and the time to stop this effrontery is now. Unfortunately, in order to do so Mr. Bush is going to find himself running into himself, having in days gone by attached such great importance to the vote of the UN Security Council. This is what we are facing:

1. The Security Council authorizes member nations to "use all necessary means" to compel Iraq to abide by its several resolutions that it get out of Kuwait. The Security Council was not foolish enough to suppose that it could describe exactly what military steps were or were not appropriate to the realization of its objective. But the whole process had to do with the distinction between sanctions, which began in August, and military action, which was sanctioned by the UN to begin on January 15 if Iraq hadn't by then complied with the directive to get out of Kuwait.

An entire week before our bomb inflicted casualties on five hundred civilians who were taking shelter in a military installation, the Soviet Union began some heavy breathing on the matter of civilians dying in the war. Yevgeny Primakov was sent to Baghdad to discuss with Saddam Hussein peaceful alternatives to the existing conflict. CNN showed the two gentlemen hugging and indeed we must assume they have a great deal in common, since Mr. Primakov is represented as a figure in what is so unfortunately and confusingly referred to as the "conservative" wing of the Soviet government—the Stalinist wing—which makes Stalin a conservative, but then that's the way it goes.

Primakov returned to Moscow and foreign-ministry spokesman Vitaly Churkin has given us the solomonic judgment of his superiors. "We have no strategy that would go beyond the UN resolutions. Our objective is, as we see it, to persuade Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait." Well, that is indeed the essence of the UN resolution with this gloss, namely that in order to secure the safety of Kuwait it will be necessary to gut the aggressive potential of the gentleman Mr. Primakov was hugging during their interview. Thanks to vigorous action by the Allies this exactly is what is going on.

Now the motives of the USSR are not difficult to penetrate. It desires to be the superpower which, at the great moment of confrontation, leaned just enough on the other side to attract the attention of the Moslem brotherhood aroused by the consequences of a war in which most of their leaders are engaged side by side with the United States. The Soviet Union counts on a backlash not only in the Moslem world, but in the Christian world. The clerics at the World Council of Churches denounced U.S. military action. It is no doubt a coincidence that the total U.S. casualties to date are just about as many as the number of Mexicans who were trampled to death worshipping at a Mexican shrine, suggesting God's designs are seldom so particularized as to call down moral thunder on well-motivated acts that result in human suffering. Our intentions in the Gulf are clear and are unimpeachable. The Soviet Union's experience with that part of the world took on an aggressive salient against Afghanistan in which it managed to kill 1.2 million Afghans before retreating with one hundred thousand of its own dead. The UN resolutions objecting to Soviet behavior throughout the period went, of course, unheeded. As indeed Saddam, who looks now to the UN for relief, ignored its reproaches throughout the fall.

What Mr. Bush needs to do in very plain language is to inform the world that the Soviet Union has not been retained as a peacemaker perhaps because it will take a generation or so of expiation for its activities over the past to qualify it as a peacemaker. If the Soviet government wants to reduce human suffering, it can do this overnight in the Baltics, and in the long term, by renouncing Soviet conservatism at home. Meanwhile we should strip Moscow of its beguiling headlines as attempted peacemaker, and bear in mind always as entirely appropriate, the image of the Soviet envoy and Saddam Hussein embracing, the celebration of affinities. □

(Universal Press Syndicate)

OFF THE RECORD

Judge Not Lest Ye Be Judged. Not since Robert Bork has a member of the bench been as misrepresented as Kenneth L. Ryskamp, President Bush's pick for the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. Last year Cato reported on the campaign against the judge led by the usual suspects, including People for the American Way. Though the nomination was stalled, the President has again put forward his name, and again things are heating up.

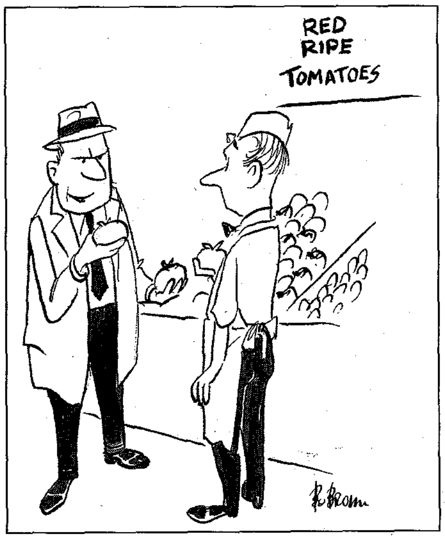
Much of the "evidence" against Judge Ryskamp is based on a 1990 *Miami Review* article entitled "Just Saying No to Rights." Among the many charges, the most notorious is the paper's accusation that the judge told a 15-year-old boy who was suing the police for brutality that it might be appropriate for him to carry around the scars from an attack by a police dog that tore his testicles as a "reminder of your wrongdoing." The boy in question, however, was only a witness, not the one suing. More to the point, the judge never directed any such comment to either plaintiff *or* witness. The quotation was lifted from the judge's philosophical musings to the attorneys, after the jury had left the room, on the general consequences of using police dogs, particularly as compared to the rather more brutal practices of countries that do things like chop your hands off for stealing.

Nonetheless, the charge resurfaced in an *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* editorial by Mark Silk earlier this month arguing against the nominee's fitness. This time the quotation is said to have been directed at a plaintiff "mangled by a police dog"; it is followed by a paragraph ripping yet another comment out of context and again applied (incorrectly) to a plaintiff. Asked by Cato about the discrepancies, Mr. Silk declined to say anything on the record, save that whatever our disagreement on facts he still thought Judge Ryskamp "insensitive." Oh.

Gotcha. On a recent visit, the vice chairman of the Chinese National People's Congress, Huang Hua, stopped by Claremont Graduate College to deliver a lecture. At a dinner beforehand, a PhD candidate, Lin Changsheng, stood up to present Mr. Huang with a Chinese scroll, noting that like Mr. Huang he too had once worked for the ministry of foreign affairs. By this time Mr. Huang was beaming, saying how much he would treasure the gift, not paying much attention as he unraveled it—until his wife started shouting "No! No! No!" It turns out the scroll was a reprint of the famous June 1989 photograph of a young man facing down a column of tanks near Tiananmen Square. Touché.

Campus Crusade. In an earlier column Cato has pointed out how the Establishment has been striking back at the now firmly Reaganite College Republicans. Although conservatives are usually considered to be jeopardizing the party by walking out when they lose fair and square, in this case it's the pro-choice wing that has caused a split by walking off to form the National Republican Collegiate Coalition for Choice. The new group has made its most serious challenge in California, where conservatives captured the state chairmanship of College Republicans last year, defeating the more liberal candidate backed by Representative Bill Thomas.

Indeed, Mr. Thomas has long been active on California's campuses on behalf of the liberal Republican wing. This has brought campus leaders in contact with some most unlikely Republican bedfellows. During the 1990 elections, for example, Roman Buhler of the House Subcommittee on Elections (of which Congressman Thomas is ranking Republican) flew out to the University of Southern California for a "Pro-Choice Republican Rally" cosponsored by the leftist Hollywood Woman's Political Caucus; among the speakers was Jim Saloman, an unsuccessful congressional nominee, who went so far as to strike the word "Republican" from all his campaign literature. Not a choice but an echo.



"It's for somebody making a speech!"

Gorby and Gallup. The March *Reader's Digest* features an article by David Satter on "the first Western-sponsored, comprehensive poll of young adults in the USSR." The results have only 6 per cent of young Soviets citing Mikhail Gorbachev as the most admired political figure—compared to 39 per cent for archrival Boris Yeltsin, president of the Russian Republic. Indeed, a whopping 51 per cent consider Mr. Gorbachev an *obstacle* to political change in the Soviet Union.

Mr. Satter tells Cato that one of his more remarkable meetings was with a provincial theater troupe in the Siberian oil town of Tyumen. Without exception, the actors stated that they had in fact believed the images of a rapacious America with which they had been indoctrinated. Their recent discovery that this was not true has made them skeptical about Gorbachev's much-vaunted reforms. One actor said the Soviet people are still but "guinea pigs" to their government. "For seventy years they tested socialism," the actor told Mr. Satter, "now they are doing the same thing with *perestroika*."

All the News—and More. Remember the footage about the animals and beaches covered with the oil Saddam Hussein dumped into the Gulf? Well, Cato wondered about the pictures inasmuch as the slick hadn't in fact yet hit the beaches when the footage aired. CNN has not responded to our calls.

—CATO

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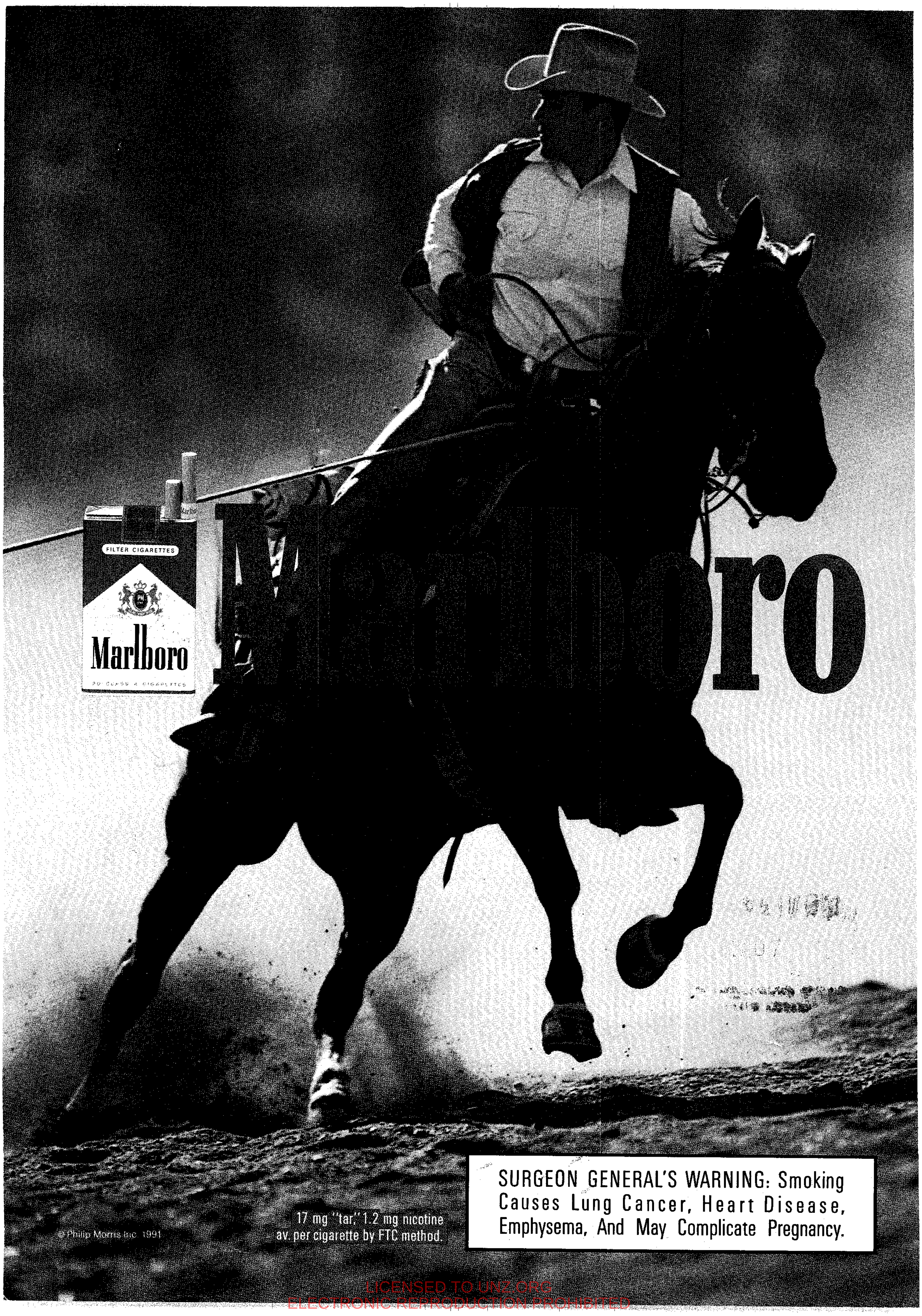
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